

Got Your 6

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Got Your 6

by [Not4typicalwriter](#)

Summary

Day 7: Soulmate AU and Weapons

"Who's that?" Dream heard Sapnap ask from the driver's seat.

"Bad, Sap, meet Goggles," Dream sighed. "World-class sniper, asshole criminal, and my soulmate. Apparently."

"What?" Dream heard his two teammates exclaim.

"You still have me on your file as codename *Goggles*?" George snickered. "Tell me you

can't hunt down a sniper without telling me you can't hunt down a sniper," George mumbled sarcastically.

"Yeah okay," Dream rolled his eyes before loading his gun and shooting it in George's direction again.

The rules were very easy. Simply put, soulmates are not able to physically harm each other. Not fatally anyway. No punching, no hitting, no weapons as well including knives, guns, not even a baseball bat. Rules are still unclear about second-hand injuries like drowning and tripping, you know, *convenient accidents*.

Most of the time, this works out very well for people. You wouldn't want to fatally harm your soulmates.

But then again, most people weren't snipers whose soulmates are special agents that are out to get them.

Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

Soulmates AU and I had so much fun with this one

last day to cap off dnf week, i'm so hyped poG

I really liked this one because it was really funny i thiNK

Hope you guys enjoyed.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Mission was simple. There was a folder of top-secret intel that was going to get handed off outside of Billington Tower from his employer to a client.

Client is a very loose term, it is mostly a deal made through blackmail. For protection and an insurmountable amount of money, George's employer would give the man being blackmailed the info to carry out the plan-

And also his daughter back.

Yeah, George was not working for a particularly good person.

No matter what happens, George is not to let any harm to his employer. And this means staking up on the 17th floor on the office building across the street with a sniper rifle and that's exactly what he did.

He was waiting for the drop, lazily humming to himself as his eyes peered through the scope of his rifle. He checked the blindspots, the nests, before looking back at the meet-up spot.

And there he was. Codename: Mr. J. Maybe he was a fan of the Joker or something. He also certainly acts that crazy. World-class criminal up to no good.

Pays good cash though.

George watched closely as Mr. J got off the car, his briefcase by his side, and walked towards a man in a suit walking out of the lobby.

George was wearing comms, but he'd rather not listen to their conversation. He just watched as Mr. J handed the briefcase to the man, a maniacal smile on his face, as he shook the man's hand and

pulled him close to whisper something.

Something threatening probably.

George checked the hot spots again, before turning his eyes on the meet-up. And that's when someone started talking in his ear.

"Sniper we got a man in a black hoodie walking close to Mr. J," Someone said. "Keep an eye out."

"Got it," George replied as he searched for him.

Scanning the crowd for the guy in the hoodie wasn't that hard actually, considering the fact that most people around the Billington Tower area wear suits to work.

The man was tall, taller than Mr. J, and walking a little too close. Hands in his pocket and George clocked the rest of his gear. A small gun strap around his ankle, no badge though. Definitely muttering something through his own set of comms and wearing a high-tech wristwatch.

Aw fuck. A spy.

Mr. J was a bad person sure, George has definitely heard about him, but they were ghost stories you know. George didn't think he was bad enough to have a spy set out to assassinate him.

George lined up his crosshair with the tall stranger after adjusting for wind speed and downward trajectory. He watched as the man inches closer, his right hand was definitely holding some kind of weapon in his pocket.

"Sniper he's getting too close," The voice in his comms said.

"Got it," George replied.

George sent off a warning shot at the stranger's shoulder. He had a silencer on so all in all, it should've been fine.

It was not.

George's bullet went through the man's shoulder and struck the giant glass structure that walled the Billington Tower, shattering into a million pieces.

George gaped.

Everyone on the street floor was scrambling, there was screaming. He watched as Mr. J, the client, and the stranger look up towards his nest. He watched as the stranger spotted him almost immediately.

"Sniper, what the hell was that?" The man in the comms asked in fury. "You missed."

"I didn't miss," George hissed. "Just get him out of there."

That didn't need to be said, his guards were already rushing to get Mr. J out of the streets as George quickly cleaned up his gear. He the bag across his back and immediately made his way down.

George was a kind-looking soul. For the most part, he just smiled at the people in the hallway, asked which floor they needed to go to when he's in the elevator, and he should be able to get away scot-free. It's the pretty privilege.

He took a turn when he got to the first floor, being very cautious as to not exit at the main-street but find his way to the alley. He went past the janitorial closet to the emergency exit and stepped out.

Only to get immediately body slammed against the brick wall.

"For the world's most *talented* sniper," The tall stranger chuckled condescendingly. "You're a bad shot."

George's head was knocked against the wall pretty hard but he was aware enough when he looked at the man in the face. Blonde hair, green eyes, far too tall for George's taste. Familiar face. Very familiar and annoying to be clear.

Dream.

Did George know who Dream was? Kind of. Was he only the man who'd been hunting George down for the past 3 years? Probably.

Was it really a surprise for George when he discovered that today was really the first time he'd tried to kill Dream? Yes actually. He really thought he'd shot him once by now but I guess not.

There was also the possibility that Dream was just super lucky because there was no way George has never tried to shoot him before, right?

"I'm not," George muttered bitterly.

"You missed your mark," Dream said mockingly. "You grazed me at most."

"I didn't miss," George grumbled and he stared him in the face, eyes glaring with fire. "Shot you in the head actually. Did you happen to get a headache in the past 10 minutes?" He lied.

"Headache?" Dream asked.

"Shoot me," George suddenly said.

"I will," Dream replied adamantly.

"Go on," George pursed his lips. "Kill me." George glanced down at his gun. "I'll wait."

Dream furrowed his eyebrows as he took his gun and held it up against George's head. George stared down the barrel, not even remotely worried when Dream pressed his finger against the trigger.

Did George know what was going to happen? About 99% sure. Call it his ego or confidence in his own skill, the probability that he's probably tried to shoot Dream before but has never succeeded, but he really needed to test this out so he can prove it.

Dream was starting to get really put off by George's calmness, and within the last second, he changed his mind. Dream pointed the gun towards George's leg and pulled the trigger.

George didn't even flinch. Not from the sound, not from the impact. Instead, he just gave Dream a

painful smile. George felt like he got pinched really bad on his thigh though.

"No," The blonde muttered fearfully. "No."

"Oh apparently so," George finally pushed him off.

"You?" Dream exclaimed as he stumbled backward.

Rule of the universe. Soulmates can't physically harm each other, especially with the intent to kill. And *boy*, was today really the day they both found out.

"I don't like it any more than you do, trust me," George said. "I told you though. I'm not a bad shot. You should've died."

Dream reached up and touched his own head, suddenly aware of how close he was to dying. He really would've. He should've.

"That's fine, I can give you a minute to recover," George said.

"You shot me," Dream exclaimed. "You tried to kill me."

"So did you!" George exclaimed defensively.

"I shot you in the leg, you shot me in the head," Dream exclaimed.

"Alright tell the whole goddamn street that we're spies why don't you?" George hissed as he smacked Dream on the shoulder. "And what? You weren't gonna kill me? That's not an extra blade in your pocket? Are you just happy to see me?"

"Oh no, no, no-" Dream chuckled. "I'm a spy, you're a hitman."

"*To-may-to, to-mah-to*," George brushed off. "As if we both don't get paid to kill people."

Dream was fuming at George. From a distance, they heard police sirens start to get louder.

"We're leaving," He grabbed George's arm which George quickly threw off. They had a little staring contest before he sighed and brought his hand up to his right ear. "Come get us Sapnap, we're busted."

"We?" Sapnap's voice told Dream that they were only going to get more confused when Dream decided to kidnap George.

"I'm heading East, you better get me," Dream threatened as he grabbed George's arm and pulled into a run.

George took his arm back though he kept on running to follow Dream. A van pulled up seconds later, the side door opening to reveal a man wearing glasses.

"Dream?" The man asked. "What's this? Who's that?"

"Get in," Dream sighed, looking at George.

Honestly, what else has George got to lose? He could hear Mr. J yell at him for missing a shot in his comms already. That's why he took off his comms earlier. So George got in the van.

"Who's that?" Dream heard Sapnap ask from the driver's seat.

"Bad, Sap, meet Goggles," Dream sighed. "World-class sniper, asshole criminal, and my soulmate. Apparently."

"What?" Dream heard his two teammates exclaim.

"You still have me on your file as codename *Goggles*?" George snickered. "Tell me you can't hunt down a sniper without telling me you can't hunt down a sniper," George mumbled sarcastically.

"Yeah okay," Dream rolled his eyes before loading his gun and shooting it in George's direction

again.

"Dream!" Bad yelled. "What on Earth is wrong with you?"

George sat calmly, legs crossed and he lied back against the seat. He glanced at Dream and smirked.

"Was that an attempt to flirt with me?" George asked. "*Soulmate?*"

"Relax, I can't hurt him even if I wanted to," Dream said Ignoring George fully. "Oh and I really want to."

"Goggles that you spent 6 months in London trying to find?" Sapnap asked.

"Aw, you spent six months trying to find me?" George said teasingly. "I haven't been in London in the past year, hate to break it to you."

"You're his soulmate?" Bad asked, though unclear who the question was directed at.

Dream didn't answer and simply shot off another two bullets at George.

"Well now you're just putting holes in your van," George said flatly.

"You shot me-" Dream exclaimed. "You shot me in the head!"

"And you shot me four times already, get over it!" George snapped back.

"My soulmate is a murderer," Dream said in disbelief.

"Ditto," George chimed in easily.

"You-" Dream exhaled angrily. "Drop me off by the bridge Sapnap, I'm going to drown him."

"You can't physically harm your soulmate Dream, that's the rules," Bad said.

"I can drop him off a bridge though," Dream said. "Just helping gravity out."

"You're an idiot, you know that?" George said. "Massive. Massive idiot."

"I'm literally going to kill you," Dream mumbled.

"Uhm, you literally cannot," George scoffed. "I have also tried."

"Oh boy," Sapnap mumbled. "This is going to be fun."

"Where are you taking me?" George asked.

"Our base," Dream mumbled. "You aren't going anywhere until we sort this out."

"Define *this*," George said.

"You're working for Davenport, we need to get rid of Davenport," Dream said. "I can't hurt you, you can't hurt me. Problem."

"Mr. J's name is Davenport?" George asked. "There's not even a J in there."

"And I'm the idiot," Dream muttered.

Bad and Sapnap made eye contact through the rearview mirror, neither of them saying a word but both knowing it will be quite interesting, to say the least.

"Skeppy the door please," Bad said into his comms.

George watched closely as the driver, Sapnap, drove into an abandoned warehouse before pulling to a stop. The gates closed and the car shut off.

"Get out," Dream said.

George's default response at anything Dream does right now is rolling his eyes at this point. But still, George followed along begrudgingly as the occupants of the car got out.

"You got busted?" Dream heard Quackity yell from their computer station. "You failed *and* almost got busted?"

"Shut up Q, I don't wanna talk about it," Dream said.

"Bad, who's that?" Skeppy called.

"I don't wanna talk about that too," Dream grumbled as he lead George closer to their setup. "Give me your weapons," He told George.

"No," George just looked at him weirdly. "Do you think I'm stupid?"

"A little bit," Dream said, grabbing George's raffle bag by force, causing George to step back and point a small handgun at Dream.

"Woah, woah!" Suddenly about 4 other guns were cocked and loaded, all pointed at George.

"Maybe a lot stupid," Dream corrected. "You can't hurt me and I can't hurt you, but I got 4 friends who can and definitely will shoot. Give me, your weapons."

Even before George handed Dream his gun, Sapnap and Bad remembering that this was really not a

threat. Bad placed a hand on Skeppy's gun to lower it and Sapnap did the same.

George grumbled and out of annoyance shot Dream in the chest. Both Quackity and Skeppy went to raise their guns again but thankfully Sapnap and Bad stopped them before anything happens.

Dream didn't flinch.

"Your rifle, your handgun, your knives, and whatever you have in your pockets unless you're just happy to see me," Dream said snidely.

George conceded and dropped his weapons one by one on a nearby table. The knives, the extra bullet magazine. He heard Dream's teammates whisper behind his back trying to figure out what the hell just happened.

"Is that everything?" Dream asked.

"Yes," George grumbled.

"If I search you I won't find anything?" Dream stared at him flatly. "Again, 4 guns."

George sighed before pulling one last butterfly knife.

"Wonderful," Dream said. "Everyone, meet Goggles. My bastard murderous soulmate."

"Pleasure," George said. "So are you just going to kidnap me and keep me here?"

"Pretty much yeah," Dream admitted. "Until we get rid of Davenport then I'll turn you over to the Feds."

"Yeah good luck with that," George scoffed.

Within seconds, Dream had pulled out handcuffs and pulled George's hand retraining him to the metal railing closest to the table.

"You were saying?" Dream said. "Here have a rolly chair. I'm not a monster."

Dream rolled over an office chair over to George for him to sit on. George simply scoffed in disbelief.

"It won't be long, we're getting rid of Davenport tonight," Dream smirked.

"Dream bud, we're gonna need more of an explanation," Quackity said.

"Well, you aren't getting any," Dream said. "Where's he heading after the drop?"

"Next checkpoint is his yacht," Skeppy said. "Leaving for Barbados. Scheduled to leave in 2 hours."

"Cool," Dream said. "Who's coming with me and who's babysitting that guy?" He pointed at George.

"I wanna go," Quackity said. "They already get to have fun earlier even though you got busted."

"I didn't get bust-" Dream sighed. "Alright who else?"

"I'll stay," Sapnap volunteered. "I want to stay with Goggles."

"Why?" Dream gave Sapnap a judgmental look.

"Well if you won't tell me things, Dreamie-boy, maybe your soulmate will," Sapnap grinned.

"Yeah right," Both Dream and George said at the same time before looking at each other in mild disgust.

"You wanna go out into the field Skeppy?" Bad offered.

"I would love to Bad," Skeppy said. "Let's go."

"We don't have a responsible brain cell in the car," Dream mumbled. "Great."

"I don't think you have a brain cell at all," George mumbled.

"Bite me, Goggles," Dream said.

"Could you find me a better codename? Goggles? Really?" George mocked as Dream walked away. "It's a stupid nickname! Where's your creativity?"

Quackity and Skeppy gathered their gears before following Dream. Dream simply flicked George off with a smile before getting in the van. Bad clicked a button that opened the warehouse door as Dream proceeded to drive out and away.

"So," Sapnap grinned. "Goggles. Why does he call you Goggles again?"

"Because I wear special Goggles to shoot people," George said easily. "Either that or maybe he thought my most impressive kill was when I shot someone in the eye through a pair of swim-goggles."

"Well," Bad yelped. "Nice to meet you Dream's soulmate," He greeted nicely.

"Why do you sound so nice?" George commented, he glanced at Sapnap. "He doesn't sound like a spy, can he kill people?"

"When he needs to," Sapnap shrugged.

"Nice to meet you," George grinned back at Bad. "Bad?"

"Call me Bad, yes," Bad nodded.

"I'm Sapnap," Sapnap said. "Hi."

"Hi," George said.

"So, you have a preferred code name?" Sapnap asked.

"No, we don't go by names in the criminal world you see," George said. "If you need me, you'll know me."

"Well your soulmate goes after criminals, so you may wanna change professions," Sapnap said.

"Well I like money," George replied sassily.

"Alright," Bad said. "Tell us about yourself Goggles."

"I am actually confused, do you genuinely think I'm going to tell you anything?" George said. "He already said he's turning me over to the Feds. All I gotta do right now is plan my great escape."

"You're handcuffed to a railing," Bad said.

"Not the first time," George muttered.

"Well we were just curious because Dream's a good guy you know," Sapnap said. "My best friend. Good looking."

"You can keep my soulmate, I don't mind," George replied.

"He has a cat," Bad said. "Do you like cats?"

George has done a lot of bad things in his life okay, and this means he's been interrogated hundreds of times. This was not the question he thought was going to catch him off guard.

"It's a cute cat too," Sapnap added.

"I used to have a cat," George said. "Can't anymore when you travel."

"What else can we tell you about Dream that isn't too revealing?" Bad said. "He sings. He's a great singer."

"Doesn't sing when you ask him to, but if you catch him singing, best thing," Sapnap said.

"Hates spicy food," Bad said. "Really hates spicy food. Can't stand it."

"Green is his favorite color," Sapnap said. "Loves green, bright green. Which is unfortunate when you have to be stealthy."

"Loves chess and Geography," Bad said. "Nerd, big nerd."

"Speeds like a daredevil, worst driver," Sapnap mocked. "Would go like 40 over the speed limit."

"What are you guys trying to do?" George said as he shook his head.

"Trying to make you get to know him," Sapnap answered.

"You're his soulmate," Bad said. "You both clearly got off on the wrong foot, but he-" Bad shrugged. "Dream's a romantic. He was really excited at the thought of meeting his soulmate."

"Then I must be a great disappointment," George said.

"I'm sure you're not a disappointment," Bad said.

"You're soulmates," Sapnap said. "Aren't you destined to be with each other?"

George looked annoyed. Not at the thought of soulmates, and not at Dream, but more so that Sapnap and Bad were right. Dream and him are soulmates for a reason. Whatever that reason may be.

George's contemplation was broken by a ringing alert from one of their computers. Bad turned and walked towards it, pressing a button when Dream's voice came on the line.

"At the dock," Dream said. "Which yacht?"

"Should be called Crown Jewel, or something like that," Bad read off the screen.

"Crown Jewel?" Quackity scoffed. "What an asshole."

"It's an Ace Fraser yacht, model 2012, refitted 2018," Bad said.

"Right, like we know what that means Bad," Skeppy hissed.

"I'll send you what it looks like," Bad said. "Picture sent."

"Oh cool," Dream said. "Not seeing it."

"Bad it's not here," Quackity complained.

"Does he had any other yacht?" Skeppy said. "He- mi-- -ough- -n-ther-- he- rich-"

"Skeppy, you're breaking up," Sapnap called.

"Oh- -it, ther-- s--one on t-- oat," Dream's voice crackled even worse on the call.

"We can't hear you guys," Sapnap yelled louder.

"-- -ack so--" Quackity said. "Cal-- Felix." and the call went dead.

"Don't you have comms?" George said slowly.

"Comms only work so well in between a massive Lighthouse and being docks-full of shipping containers," Bad explained.

"I'm sorry," George said. "Shipping containers?"

"Yeah," Bad said.

"You sent them to a shipping dock?" George asked incredulously.

"Yes, that's where we were told the yacht would be," Bad said.

"Do you not see a problem with that?" George said. "Why would a recreational luxury yacht be in a shipping yard?"

"Rich people man, we don't know them," Sapnap shrugged.

"Where did you get your intel?" George said.

"Don't worry about it," Sapnap hummed.

"I will worry about it because you're walking into a trap," George said, making Bad and Sapnap freeze up instantly. "How many people know you're going after Davenport?"

"Uhm-" Bad stuttered. "We- we have an inside-"

"No, you most definitely do not have an inside person in Mr. J's operation, it's a setup," George said.

"Bad, call them back, call them back now," Sapnap said urgently.

"You need to get them out of there," George said. "Now."

"Call isn't going through," Bad said. "Signal blocked or out of range."

"They're gonna need back-up," George struggled against the railings. "Let me go, let me help."

"Alright Bad, let's go," Sapnap said.

"Wait, let me help!" George said.

"Sorry Goggles, we can't risk it," Sapnap said.

"What does that mean?" George said angrily. "Does it really matter if I try to run away in comparison to your friends' lives?"

"You just said that we can't trust anyone inside Mr. J's operation," Bad said. "You were *in* Mr. J's operation like two hours ago. You shot Dream in the head."

"I don't care about Mr. J's operation, I'm a freelancer," George said hurriedly. "I lied, I didn't shoot him in the head, I shot him on the shoulder as a warning shot. I'm trying to help, you'll need me."

"Why would you help?" Sapnap asked.

"Because he's my soulmate!" George yelled out, panting and out of breath, not realizing his heart has been trashing against his ribcage. "And I'd like to know more about him other than like cats, likes green, can sing, and hates spicy food."

"Thought you didn't care," Sapnap said.

"I-" George said. "Let me help, you'll need me."

"Goggles-" Bad said.

"George," George said. "My name is George. There, now you can find me."

Bad and Sapnap shared a look before Sapnap nodded. He quickly released George from the handcuffs. George quickly rubbed his reddening wrist and went straight for his weapons. Bad got the rest of the gear, handing George an earpiece and Sapnap started up their second car.

George was strapping up in the back seat, checking his gear as Sapnap drove like an absolute mad man into the street. The shipping dock isn't too far from their warehouse, so the fast and furious style got them there pretty quick.

"Did he say Felix?" George said.

"What?" Bad asked.

"Your one friend, Q?" George said. "He said something about Felix. I think that's one of the illegal boats of Mr. J's associates. If they recognized someone-"

"They're on the Felix," Bad concluded.

"I'll be nesting up on the roof of that building," George said.

"George," Bad called. "We don't usually work in teams of six so we don't have an extra earpiece. You have an old one that I channeled to only Dream's frequency."

"I'll get Q, you get Skeppy?" Sapnap asked and Bad nodded.

"Sounds good," George said.

"If you need to tell us something, you'll need to tell it through Dream," Bad said.

"Inconvenient but I'll live," George said. "We don't have much time they're probably going blow up the ship soon."

"They what?" Sarnap yelled.

"Just go," George told them before running to find a good space to nest.

George did not think that he has ever assembled his weapon this fast before. Setting it up at the corner of the roof, he crouched down and pulled down his infamous goggles. Peering into the scope, he saw a very familiar face.

Blonde, green eyes, annoying.

Of course, the man already got himself captured, coarse ropes wrapped around his wrists, hands tied behind his back. He was on his knees in front of a dark-haired man in a suit.

Johansen. God, George hated Johansen. He was in charge of hiring and technically HR for Mr. J, however much a criminal operation needs an HR. George absolutely loathed every second he needed to interact with Johansen, with his pompous hair, snobby glasses, pretentious gold pocket watch, which George can assure you is a fake. (Granted he was the one who swapped it out for a fake during their like, sixth meeting and has yet to get caught.)

He flicked the little toggle on his earpiece that now meant he could listen to whatever the hell was happening over there.

Part of him was kind of glad that Dream was alone. This meant that his friends were still out and about, and could probably help him out. They could also already be dead, but there were no bloody drag marks on the deck so they're fine.

"Agent 27916," Johansen's voice was crackling through Dream's earpiece. "You've really been a pain in my ass you know."

"Maybe if you weren't such a dickwad," Dream replied almost instantly.

"I should have you killed," Johansen said. "Send a sniper after you. Whichever one can kill you gets to keep their job. Wouldn't that be fun? I can let you go and it'll be a little cat and mouse

game."

"Very fun," Dream responded.

"Dream, there are 17 men on the North East side," Quackity's voice rang in Dream's ear. "I can't get through, stay alive man."

"I'm going through under, comms are going to cut out soon," Skeppy said.

Dream listened, his earpiece hidden very well in his ear and no one had bothered to search him. But Dream heard other background noises, quickly still masking his face so they won't know if anything was wrong.

"We're here, hang in there Dream," Sapnap's voice was low but clear.

"Skeppy you need to tell me where you are," Bad said.

"What are you-" Quackity said confusedly, Dream equally so but in silence. "What are you doing here?"

"It's a trap yeah?" Sapnap said. "We need to get you guys out."

"Easier said than done, this place is crawling," Quackity said. "And Skeppy's comms are out apparently the moment you get too low below deck."

"Fucking fantastic," Sapnap said.

"Language," Bad muttered.

Of course, George could not hear any of this conversation. He could only hear Dream talking back to Johansen.

"Do it," Dream responded. "Your sniper's kinda shit, I think I'll be fine. Missed a shot this morning did he?"

That mother fuc-

"He's a freelancer," Johansen brushed off easily. "I would love to, I would. But Mr. J likes things clean and tied up nicely in a bow, so this is what's gonna happen."

"Right, go on," Dream drawled. "Go do your Bond villain speech, go on."

"This ship is going to go up in flames in about fifteen minutes," Johansen said. "Call it an accident."

"You're going to blow up your ship?" Dream scoffed. "Just to kill me? Seems a bit *overboard* don't you think?" He chuckled and grinned cheekily. "Overboard, get it?"

"Christ, Dream," Quackity can't help but snort and everyone else groaned at the stupid pun.

"Well no," Johansen said. "This ship is filled, and I mean *filled* to the brim with uhm- what's the word, merchandise. You know those illegal things you've been hunting us down for?"

"You're going to blow up your own things?" Dream said.

"I never said they were *our* merchandise," Johansen said. "The guns belong to Livingston's stock, you know, our competitor from across the ocean. The drugs, from the Griffith's operation, we stole those too. The people-"

"The people?" George could see Dream physically stiffen up.

"Why yes," Johansen grinned. "Weren't you the first one who accused us of human trafficking?"

George felt his heart sank to the pit of his stomach. He didn't know about the people, he really didn't. Oh god-

"Now," Johansen said. "We've planted evidence, plenty of evidence of you on this ship Agent

27916, so when it blows up, and when your people come, they would see-

"They're innocent people!" Dream yelled.

"-we weren't even here," Johansen continued.

"You piece of shit fucker-" Dream continued.

"But you were, and you were around so many illegal things," Johansen gasped playfully. "And they'd start to wonder-"

"Bastard," Dream spat as he surged forward only to immediately have 6 guns cocked at him. "You son of a bitch."

Dream knew Bad was having an aneurysm somewhere, but Bad is also currently more concerned about the people than the language.

"-if any of your investigations ever really meant anything at all," Johansen concluded. "Sad for your team though, they'd be shunned and discredited so fast."

"You won't get away with this," Dream said. "I'll kill you myself. I will."

"Sure," Johansen said easily. He took the pocket watch out and opened it, holding it in the air and he checked the time. "Would you look at that? You have 10 minutes."

A bullet came flying through the air and shot through the pocket watch, throwing it off Johansen's hands. Before Dream and Johansen both could process what was happening, or even gasp at that matter, two other shots went for the 2 henchmen closest to Dream, their gun immediately falling to the ground.

"What-" Johansen said.

Dream felt three pinches at the bottom of his spine, and then suddenly his hands were free. George

had sniped through the rope with three bullets, knowing that he won't be able to hurt Dream anyway.

"Hey soulmate," George finally said after shooting a third henchman down. "I'm kinda shit huh?" He challenged.

Dream picked up the dropped rifle and shot the last two henchmen down.

"The hell are you doing here?" Dream asked sternly.

"That's a very odd way to say thank you," George said.

"You shot me again?" Dream said.

"You weren't gonna get hurt, I shot through your ropes, again, you're welcome," George said.

"Where'd that bastard go?" Dream said.

"Johansen left, it's not important, we need to get you out," George said.

"Why didn't you kill him?" Dream said accusingly.

"You called dibs!" George exclaimed. "You need to get out of there, the bomb is going to blow in like 9 minutes."

"How are you here? How-" Dream said.

"Dream, who the hell are you talking to?" Quackity asked.

"Goggles is on my comms," Dream briefly explained. "I'm free. If you see a guy in a suit that looks like he eats children for breakfast, kill him on sight."

"Dream, get out of there, tell your friends to get out of there," George said. "I'll clear a path for you to the dock."

"We need to defuse the bomb," Dream declared.

"No, you need to get out of there," George said.

"There are innocent people on this ship," Dream said. "You either help me, or you go," he snapped.

"Call it Dream," Bad said in his comms.

"Skeppy is down there, I'm guessing the people are in the lower decks. If you find the humans, get them out or get them as far away as possible from the source of the explosion," Dream said.

"Sapnap, you have the most experience with explosives."

"They're gonna have it in the engine room for sure," Sapnap said.

"Vouch," Quackity said. "I'm staring at it."

"Sapnap, go help Q in the engine room, Bad you're going to Skeppy correct?" Dream said.

"On my way, comms may cut out," Bad said.

"I'm going after that asshole," Dream said.

Dream felt a little empty, his soulmate's voice no longer in his ear as he talked strategies with his team. He did snap and tell him to go. Not that he could blame his soulmate really, he was just telling him to leave and get to safety. Doesn't matter, Dream doesn't care.

But the butterflies in his stomach told him otherwise when he heard the British voice in his ear again.

"Two men coming your four o'clock," George said. "Careful."

Dream could feel the men approaching from his peripherals only to have them collapse before they could attack him.

"Johansen's going to the helipad at the Northside of the ship, up three levels," George told Dream.

"That's the fucker's name?" Dream asked. "Up three levels you say?"

Dream climbed over the railing, threw his hands up to grab the upper floor before lifting himself up to the next level and jumping over the railing. Unfortunately, though, a few of those 17 men Quackity mentioned earlier were there.

Dream didn't have time to land on both feet when he got struck in the face so fast he almost got thrown off the ship. Two shots from George took down the person who attacked and his friend giving Dream enough time to bring himself back up to fight the other men.

"Go left, go left," George said.

Dream swerved and a bullet shot through his chest hitting the man behind him.

"You shot me," Dream said without missing a step, still fighting his way through.

"I said left!" George exclaimed.

"I *went* left!" Dream yelled back.

"I mean *your* left! Why the hell would you go *my left*?" George replied just as loudly.

"I don't know!" Dream screamed. "Use the normal time call out, you weirdo."

"Well tell me before you parkour off the side of the boat you asshole," George hissed. "I didn't clear the floor yet."

"Well did you clear the floor now? Heading up," Dream declared.

"Cleared. Got your six," George said as Dream made it up. "Chopper landing, better get there quick."

"I'm trying," Dream grunted.

"Try harder," George said, a small smile on his face when he heard Dream scoff. "He's coming from the other side of the chopper, I can't get a clear shot, not through glass and doors, and definitely not when the blade's spinning. I'll try my best but you're on your own from here."

"Got it," Dream said. "Boys, what's the status update?" He called out.

"We bypassed three security measures," Quackity said. "We're kinda fucked by the fourth one."

"What's wrong?" Dream asked.

"They stripped the wires. I don't know enough to defuse it without colors," Sapnap said. "Timer's at less than 4 minutes."

"Bad, Skeppy, do you copy?" Dream yelled. "Where are you? Are you out yet?"

"We're almost out, people and headi-" Skeppy was cut off by a bunch of gunshots. "We're good, people are starting to go up to the main deck."

"Good," Dream said. "Sapnap if you can't defuse it, leave it."

"Leave it?" George exclaimed. "What do you mean leave it, you're at the top, how much time do you have?"

"Four minutes," Dream said. "Sapnap, Q, go."

"Dream you need to get off the boat," Sapnap said.

"Get the people out, I'll be fine," Dream said.

"Get off the fucking boat Dream," George was much more aggressive.

"Johansen is not getting on that chopper," Dream said adamantly.

"Dream you get off the ship right now," Quackity said. "I'm not leaving if you're not."

"Get off the boat, we're not all dying!" Dream exclaimed.

"Well I won't stop trying to defuse the bomb then," Sapnap said. "You wanna be stubborn, let's be fucking stubborn Dream."

"Don't touch the wires Sapnap, get out of there," Dream said.

"Wait what wires?" George said. "Why can't Sapnap defuse the bomb?"

"Stripped wires, no colors," Dream said quickly as George watched him get to the top of the ship.
"Hey asshole!" He yelled.

Dream sent three shots off to Johansen to which Johansen returned, now brandishing his own rifle.

"No color-" George mumbled. "I can defuse it, I know how to."

"I don't even know where you are, you won't make it," Dream said.

"Then just pass on the information," George said. "Do you trust me?"

There was a pause as Dream rolled to avoid getting shot at, but at the same time relentlessly blocking Johansen's entry to the chopper. George made himself useful by sniping whichever henchmen were on their way up so that the only people on the helipad were Dream, Johansen, the pilot, and about 3 guards.

"Yes, yes, I trust you," Dream said. "Sapnap, Goggles says he can defuse it."

"His name is George by the way," Sapnap said.

"George?" Dream repeated.

"Yes, we're moving on!" George said sternly as he tried to aim for the base of the helicopter blades. "Four wires I'm guessing, find the thickest one. There's one that's thickest than the other. Don't cut that one."

"If there are 4 wires, eliminate the thickest wire, don't cut it," Dream recited as he ducked behind a few box crates, bullets flying above his head.

"Four wires, thickest. Got it," Sapnap said.

"Three minutes," Quackity called. "Bad, Skeppy, you need to speed-run the extraction."

"On the side closest to the timer, is the thick wire plugged in the center two or the outside two?" George said.

"On the side closest to the timer-" Dream repeated. "Is the thick wire in the center two or outside two?"

"What?" Sapnap said confusedly.

"Yeah I didn't get that either," Dream admitted. "What?"

"Four wires plugged from top to bottom," George said, his eyes still trained on his scope, this time

aiming for the plexiglass at the front of the chopper to distract the pilot from helping Johansen. "Is the thick wire number 1 and 4, or 2 and 3?"

"Four wires plugged from top to bottom, is the thick wire at 1 and 4, or 2 and 3?" Dream repeated as he struggled and ran towards Johansen.

"It's three, it's three," Sapnap said.

"It's three," Dream groaned as he got decked in the face.

"Good then four is also safe, don't cut it," George said. Suddenly he felt a bullet striking the side of his nest. It's about time the enemy brought their own sniper I guess, even though a little late in the game.

"Four is safe, don't cut it," Dream managed to say even though he's in a chokehold.

"Between one and two, one is connected to a bunch of electrical shit, and one is connected to the mechanical shit," George explained as he ducked, trying to avoid getting shot in the head while still trying to find the enemy nest.

"Dream?" Sapnap called. "What did George say?"

"Ninety seconds," Quackity called. "Bad, Skeppy, I need feedback, are you guys out yet?"

"Almost," Bad replied over multiple rounds of gunshots. "Most are out. Where are you guys?"

"Don't worry about us," Sapnap said. "Dream?"

"Occupied," Dream choked.

George cursed, knowing that his ducking from the enemy sniper probably meant more guards have gone up to the helipad to help Johansen.

Fuck it.

He went back to his sniping position, knowing full well he's back in view of whoever was going to take him out. Still, his eyes peered into the scope and steadied himself.

He heard one bullet struck brick inches away from him, but he adjusted his crosshair and shot at Dream. The bullet, of course, did not injure Dream, instead embedding itself in whoever was holding him. George felt heard another bullet graze his shoulder. That was way too close.

He knew there is a reason why he was hired as a freelancer. Mr. J's snipers were absolute dog shit. They are getting closer though.

"Between wires one and two, one is connected to electrical, one is connected to mechanical," Dream panted out.

George sent out two more shots that took out the guard, and by a stroke of luck, the pilot. Johansen's not leaving now. By the fourth bullet that was sent George's way, George had already flattened himself on the floor.

Way too close.

"One is connected to more wires, and one is connected to some plastic casing," Sapnap said.

"Sixty seconds," Quackity said. "Bad, Skeppy, get out, *now*!"

"One connects to more wires, one connects to a plastic casing," Dream said as he threw a punch at Johansen.

"Does the plastic have a button and look like a detonator?" George asked.

"We're out, we're out!" Bad yelled. "Where are you guys?"

"Don't worry about it Bad, get as far away as possible, go now!" Quackity said.

"Q, you better go," Sapnap said.

"No chance," Quackity reply. "Dream I know you're busy, but 30 seconds."

"Does the plastic look like a detonator?" Dream asked in between his fistfight with Johansen.

"Who the hell are you even talking to?" Johansen said, but Dream just threw another punch at him.

"Kinda," Sapnap replied. "Not sure."

"Fifteen seconds," Quackity called out.

"You need to get out, you need to get out," Skeppy's voice was full of fear and panic.

"Not sure, he says kinda," Dream relayed.

"Cut it," George yelled. "Just cut the plastic one."

"Cut that one," Dream said.

Sapnap didn't have to be told twice, immediately snipping the curled wire with a pair of side-cutters that he'd found earlier. Quackity and Sapnap looked at the timer, now frozen and blinking at 3.02 seconds.

"Holy shit," Sapnap said.

"Holy shit," George said at the same time from his roof too.

"Need some back up here if we're done," Dream sighed. "He's down. Alive but down."

Amidst all the panic and tension of impending doom, George hadn't realized that Dream had beaten Johansen senseless. Dream glanced down at the bloodied face in disgust, knowing full well he's passed out. He glanced around the rooftop before spotting a nest on the Southside of the top deck.

"On our way," Sapnap replied.

With the blades now slowing down, he heard the silenced gunshot from a sniper rifle. Dream took a handgun and snuck around the back. The sniper turned to shoot Dream, but he was faster. Three shots and the sniper was immobilized.

Dream knelt down and peered through the scope only to see George's nest, his weapon still set though the man was nowhere to be seen. He looked at the bullet scorch marks on the corner of the roof, a few chipped bricks where the sniper had obviously been targeting George.

"Why didn't you tell me you had a sniper on you?" Dream asked.

"You were busy," George said, still lying down on the ground.

"Well I took care of him," Dream said.

George turned and looked into the scope, finally finding his soulmate at the enemy's nest. Dream was also looking at him through his scope, giving him a small wave. George felt his heart skip a beat.

No. That's stupid.

"We did good today," Dream said. "We work pretty well together and saved innocent people."

George looked at the dock. He saw Bad and Skeppy lead out a hoard of people- a hoard of *victims*- up to the pier. Women and children. Oh god, women and children who probably couldn't even speak English, taken by force and-

George felt sick to his stomach. He'd been ignorant far too long, only looking for money and comfort.

"George?" Dream called.

"Dream I-" George gulped. He felt his voice shake as he pulled away from his gun, can't really standing the thought of looking at his soulmate anymore. "I didn't know about the people, I promise." George blurted out. "I didn't."

"George-" Dream began.

"Dream, have you called HQ?" Sapnap yelled as he got to the helipad. Dream turned to see Quackity attempt to put handcuffs on the unconscious Johansen.

"Hang on a minute Sap," Dream said. "George, look-"

When Dream peered into the scope, George's nest was clean and he was nowhere to be found.

"George?" Dream called, only to receive no answer. "George."

"I think he's running," Sapnap said.

"Do you got this Sap? I'm gonna go after him," Dream said.

"Yeah, yeah, go," Sapnap said. "Bad, can you call HQ for me? I don't want to," he whined.

Dream jumped down from the side again, from railing to railing, landing on the dock on his knees before sprinting towards the building where George's nest was. He ran past Skeppy and Bad, and the victims.

Dream made it to the roof and swung the door open. The rooftop looked like it was untouched. Dream's eyes scanned around quickly as he leaned over the edge of the building but he could not see where George could've run. Between the shipping containers and the fleet of government cars that they actually summoned this time, George could be anywhere.

With a disappointed heart, Dream walked back down to meet with his supervisor, riding in a black SUV behind a fleet of local police cars. Dream walked towards the SUV and stood by the passenger side door, waiting for the window to roll down.

"This isn't exactly undercover Agent 27916," His supervisor said. "The mission was to take out Davenport and you not only failed, but exposed yourself. What was the deal with this morning?"

"Understood sir, I apologize," Dream said. "Ran into some unexpected issue this morning."

He was not about to explain that whole situation.

"Hmm," He simply hummed. "The guns and drugs and people are a plus, so I will excuse you. These are some incriminating evidence for Livingston and the Griffiths. You've also gotten Johansen, who is notorious for escaping a lot."

"Thank you, sir," Dream said.

"Your team will be relocated to another warehouse by the end of the week, but until then, good work," His supervisor complimented. "We'll be in contact."

The window of the SUV rolled back up as the car drove away. Dream exhaled a breath of relief when he finally sees his boss gone. More relieved that he wasn't in trouble for the shit show that was today.

"Son," Dream turned to see an old guard from the building where George was nesting walk towards him. "Your friend wanted me to give you this."

The guard gave him a piece of paper and an earpiece. George must've left it.

"Thank you, thank you," Dream said as the old man nodded and walked back to his post.

Dream pocketed the earpiece before opening the paper, seeing very rushed scribbled words on it. George had left him a note apparently.

For the record, your friends are annoying. Here are 6 things.

I also like cats, used to have one.

Blue is my favorite color.

I don't sing but can play the guitar.

Sweet foods are my favorite.

I like Geography too but I guarantee, I will beat you in chess. Nerds huh?

I don't drive and not excited to ever get in a car with you.

I guess here's an extra one: I wear the goggles because I'm colorblind.

Funny how that helped us defuse a bomb.

Hope it won't take you 6 months to try and find me this time.

- George :]

Dream was confused but had an involuntary smile on his face after he finished reading. He folded the note when he saw his friends coming up to him after handing off the people to ambulances and whichever remaining bad guys to the police.

"How did you know to come?" Dream asked immediately. "How'd you figure out it was a trap?"

"George," Bad said. "Figured it out. Gave us his name so we'd trust him and let him come to help."

"What else did he tell you?" Dream waved the folded note. "Or what did you tell him, to be exact?" He squinted at them accusingly.

"Just a few things Dream, don't worry about it," Sappnap grinned cheekily. "He did tell us we can't trust the mole in Mr. J's operation anymore, clearly."

"You know I'm glad he came," Quackity commented. "Came in clutch."

"He's colorblind," Dream said. "That's why he knew how to defuse a bomb without the colored wires. He had to learn," he chuckled as he tucked the note safely in his pocket.

"He's gone now is he?" Skeppy asked and Dream nodded.

"No worries," Dream smirked. "I'll find him. I'll always find him."

Chapter End Notes

This is most likely the one that i may want to expand into a full chaptered fic depending on response
So let me know what you think

kudos and comments are super greatly appreciated
thank you o much for all that have been here through the entire DNF week! i had so much fun!

I don't know when next update will be (or which wip it will be actually) so, we'll see.

That's all thanks so much

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

yall make me cry every day, I've never gotten so much excitement for a fic. there were sooo many comments honestly thank you thank you

took some time, plotted it out, planned out i think until the epilogue it's about 15 chapters if it all goes well

added more tags. (but not all tags because that would be spoilers)

so for the time being, enjoy this rushed chapter that's going to set up this epic story.

(THIS HAD MINIMAL EDITING MINIMAL EDITING IM SORRY)

Byeee

NEW UPDATE NOTE: No longer using Sapnap's real name, all of that is replaced with "Wilder" which is his fake/fanfic last name that i gave him. Thanks.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Turns out looking for a person who worked for the criminal underground, a person who doesn't actually have a code name, and even when they do know his 'real' name, it's a name as common as George, is not an easy feat.

Dream has spent the last 19 days trying his goddamn best. And he is failing, miserably.

"Dream?" Bad called softly, quietly making his way towards the dimly lit desk in the middle of the dark warehouse.

This is probably the third time this week Dream fell asleep at his desk in their new warehouse. No longer was he that suave special agent cockily telling Skeppy that he was most definitely going to find his soulmate again- he was always going to find him- he's now just a tired-out romantic who was beyond exhausted.

Bad gave him a soft smile, a pitiful smile as he looked at his friend, his brother at this point, drooling over a pile of old case files where they even mentioned an unknown sniper. Bad jolted when he felt the phone in his pocket vibrate before picking up the call.

"Did you find him?" Sapnap's sleepy voice was heard across the call, which was expected as it was around 3 o'clock in the morning.

"Yeah, I found him," Bad whispered softly. "I'll take him back to my place, he can have the guest room. You can go back to sleep Sapnap."

"Thanks for checking. Was just worried," Sapnap mumbled. "Said he was gonna-" and another yawn, "-ome home, but didn't."

"I know," Bad chuckled. "Go back to bed Sapnap, we'll talk more tomorrow."

"Okay," Sapnap sighed. "Night Bad."

Bad hung up the call as he slowly approached Dream's desk. He crouched down to line his face up with Dream's head and gently called him.

"Dream buddy," He called. "I'm gonna take you okay?"

Dream barely stirred as he mumbled something incoherent. Bad placed a hand on Dream's head, softly patting his hair down hoping that the little movements might be enough to wake him up without startling him but Dream was somehow in a deep sleep.

Bad slowly pulled Dream up from his sleeping position, forcing him to sit upright when Dream finally blinked.

"Five more minutes please," Dream moaned.

"We're just getting you to bed buddy, come on, my place is less than a 10-minute drive," Bad coaxed. "My guest room is much more comfortable than the desk."

Not to mention Dream is really tall so slouching over his desk is hardly comfortable and really messes up with his spine.

Dream just made a little whiny groan as Bad threw his arm over his shoulder, pulling him towards the passenger side of his car. Dream's feet were dragging across the floor and he spent the whole walk with his eyes closed, trusting Bad to open the door and even pull the seatbelts on for him.

Bad was genuinely impressed at how far Dream could go back and fall asleep so easily throughout the very short car ride. It made the drive quiet, just Dream's snoring lightly filling the car as Bad

didn't want the radio to wake him up.

Bad quickly pulled into the driveway of the little house and, he and Skeppy were renting out for their stay in North Carolina and prepared himself for the journey that is getting Dream inside.

Through a bit of struggle, unbuckling of seatbelts, dragging someone half a foot taller than you, Bad finally managed to get Dream inside of his house.

"The guest room is right-" Bad was closing the front door and locking it for the night when he heard a thump only to turn and see Dream collapsed on the sofa. "Or you can have the sofa. Better than your desk I guess."

He watched as Dream snuggled into the decorative pillows on the couch and didn't have the heart to wake him up again. So he resorted to instead just take the throw blanket off the seat and covered Dream with it.

Dream was already fast asleep when Bad went back into his bedroom. And even though Bad tried to be as quiet as he could, Skeppy's voice told him he'd awoken.

"Bad?" Skeppy called.

"Go back to sleep Skeppy, sorry for being loud," Bad hushed as he took off his outdoor wear and changed into his sleepwear.

"It's okay, Sapnap texted me so I was kinda awake and waiting," Skeppy mumbled.

"Sorry, I had to check on him," Bad said as he got back into bed, lying on his side now face to face with Skeppy. He placed a hand on Skeppy's face and gently caressed it. "Go back to sleep."

"Is he in the guest room?" Skeppy asked.

"Crashed on the couch. Couldn't make it far enough," Bad said with an endearing smile.

"Better than his desk," Skeppy replied, causing Bad to smile at their similarity. "He's doing 12-hour workdays with the Davenport Op and an extra however many hours finding Goggles because he doesn't let us help him," Skeppy criticized.

"Maybe he's scared we'd judge him because George is a criminal. His soulmate is a criminal Skep," Bad said. "Someone he's supposed to catch- he's been trying to catch, and if he does, what then?"

"We'd still help him if he asked," Skeppy said. "And he's a criminal who saved our lives."

"I know," Bad nodded. "We'll talk to him tomorrow."

"You know, if I had a nickel for every time someone in our team finds a soulmate by means of shooting them with a gun, I would have two nickels," Skeppy muttered. "Oh wait! Three! Does it count as three?"

"I never shot you Skeppy," Bad said defensively. "You shot me."

"Yeah but there's two of us," Skeppy said. "Besides. You threw the knife first."

"It was an acci- go to sleep Skeepy," Bad rolled his eyes as Skeppy just continued to giggle.

"Goodnight Bad," Skeppy said, leaning forward to place a kiss on Bad's cheek before going back to close his eyes

"Bad, you're out of OJ. What kind of person runs out of OJ?"

"We don't drink orange juice Q, we drink apple. It's on the bottom shelf."

"And milk. What am I supposed to have my cereal with?"

"Sapnap, I'm cooking pancakes, eggs, and bacon, you're not eating cereal."

"Shh, you're gonna wake him."

Dream woke up to the sound of talking that was quickly followed by a bunch of hushes. It was also probably because of the smell of bacon and eggs, and man, Dream was starving.

Dream felt around, unsure where he was at the moment, only knowing noise and bright light from the window. He groaned as he moved from his very unconventional position on the couch, his spine cracking as he turned.

"Mornin' sleeping beauty," Dream heard Quackity's voice from somewhere in the direction of the food.

"Morning," Dream mumbled, swinging his leg off the sofa. He rubbed his eyes, blinking himself awake to finally see his team around the kitchen.

Sapnap was sitting on the barstool and Quackity sat himself on top of the bar itself though Sapnap was smacking him off. Skeppy was mixing the pancake batter while Bad continued to fry up some eggs and bacon.

"What are you guys doing here?" Dream looked at Sapnap and Quackity.

"Bad invited us over for breakfast," Quackity said. "Said we need to talk."

"Did you sleep alright?" Bad asked Dream.

"Yeah," Dream yawned. "Thanks for getting me last night, I just-" he shrugged lazily.

"Awh, that's alright Dream," Bad said.

"No, it's not," Sapnap exclaimed. "You had me worried last night, I thought you died."

"And all you did when you thought he died was text me," Skeppy snarked and Sapnap sneered.

"I just fell asleep," Dream said as he sat on the table.

"Dream, we need to talk about that," Sapnap said.

"Let him eat breakfast first, we don't gotta surprise him with an intervention first thing," Quackity said.

"Intervention?" Dream said quizzically.

"How do you like your eggs Dream?" Bad ignored his question.

"What intervention?" Dream turned around and ignored Bad.

"If you don't tell me, you're getting scrambled," Bad sang.

"Scrambled's fine Bad, thanks," He replied quickly. "What intervention?"

Dream watched as his friends shared a look amongst each other, various stages of contemplation and dissonance before Skeppy finally decided to be the one who talks.

"Last night was the third time you slept at the warehouse," Skeppy said. "This week."

"I was just tired, I fell asleep," Dream said defensively.

"Yeah, yeah, but it's the third time," Skeppy said.

"So?" Dream challenged.

"Dream," Sapnap said. "You're working full time on the Davenport warehouse bust, and working more hours trying to find George, you're tired."

"I'm fine," Dream quickly brushed off as he received a plate of eggs and bacon from Bad.

"You are exhausted," Bad said, watching closely as Dream wolfed down his breakfast. "You need to let us help."

"What do you mean? You guys do the work too," Dream said. "Finding the base address, finding Davenport's associates, potential deals happening-"

"With the Davenport Op, sure," Quackity said. "But you need to start letting us help with the soulmate thing."

"No," Dream shot down immediately. "No, it's fine. I got it."

"You clearly do not *got* it," Sapnap sneered. "You spent the last 3 weeks doing overtime for that shit and you can't even find him."

"It's my problem, I got it," Dream said.

"We can't have you tired and falling asleep when we raid Davenport's base of operations," Quackity said. "It's not just your problem."

"So you're just worried I'll sleep tomorrow during the raid?" Dream said. "I'll be fine, it's fine, I promise."

"No, Dream, what Q meant-" Skeppy said. "This isn't just a you problem. Okay? We're not just a team, we're friends. We're family. You need to let us help you find him."

"Since you're clearly failing," Sapnap added and Dream quickly flipped him off.

"He's my soulmate, I can find him," Dream said, though the words were starting to sound a little more like him trying to convince himself.

"But you don't have to do it alone," Bad concluded. "Dream-" he called, and waited until Dream

met his eyes. "We don't care if he's a sniper that used to work for Davenport."

"Well, we care a little bit," Quackity said. "But obviously we're still gonna help you find him."

"And we won't snitch, we promise," Skeppy said. "You wanna look out for him, we wanna look out for you. Let us help Dream."

Dream sighed, biting his lip down as his gaze shifts through every single one of his friends.

"I don't want you guys to have to be affiliated with a criminal," Dream mumbled.

"We can handle it," Sapnap said. "You're acting like soulmates are a choice."

"But being friends with me is," Dream told them.

"And we already made that choice," Bad said. "You're letting us help okay? We'll take this one step at a time, we'll cross that bridge when we get to it."

Dream stayed quiet, his eyes starting to find the remaining scrambled eggs on his plate much more interesting than his friends' gaze.

"Dream, we're in this together," Sapnap said. "Got it?"

"Thank you," Dream slowly nodded before looking up, a little guilty smile on his face. "Thank you, guys."

"Alright, you have room for chocolate chip pancakes right?" Skeppy said and Dream scoffed a little laugh before nodding again.

"Hey," Quackity said. "Me first, I was here first."

"Shut up, Quackity," Skeppy said jokingly.

"Alright, here's the plan," Bad said. "We've found the Davenport warehouse, we've set up a mole and the bust is tomorrow. We've done the heavy lifting this far so Dream, you can dip until the bust tomorrow. Sapnap too."

"I don't need to dip," Dream said.

"There isn't much work needed for tomorrow anyway. You can start today, and after tomorrow the rest of us will join into this cause," Skeppy said. "Just listen to the plan, we've figured this thing out, okay?"

"We've moved to North Carolina, which is kinda weird, but it's kinda great because do you know what's in North Carolina, Dream?" Bad said.

"No," Dream played along to Bad's antics. "What's in North Carolina?"

"The Archives," Bad said.

"Okay, I thought I was going to know what you're talking about but I don't," Dream said.

"You know how you've been requesting files and they send you a couple and you print them out?" Skeppy said. "Files are mostly kept on digital archives that are passed around between all the 4 offices across America, however, the central database is here, in NC."

"Why?" Dream said.

"Because there's nothing in North Carolina Dream," Sapnap said sarcastically.

"No, I mean why does that matter?" Dream said.

"Okay, so because the database is here, they have a more advanced search engine and filter to figure out info. Plus, they have an archivist," Bad explained.

"That's going to make your search much faster," Skeppy said. "Much faster than requesting 3-4 files at a time."

"That's not going to help me though," Dream said. "I'd rather not put his name through our Herobrine's database. What if they find him?"

"Ah, lucky for you-" Quackity cheered. "You have a Sapnap."

"Q, I swear-" Sapnap threatened.

"You said you wanted to help him," Quackity said. "Go help him then."

"Okay," Dream mumbled unsurely. "I have a Sapnap, what does that mean?"

"Sapnap went to the archives about two weeks ago when we were still in the middle of the Davenport investigation," Quackity said. "Made a friend."

"Q-" Sapnap said warningly. "I beg you, shut up."

"A very special friend," Quackity wiggled his eyebrows causing Sapnap to groan and rub his temples.

"You don't have to make it sound like that," Sapnap said.

"Awh Sappy, it's alright," Bad said. "We all get crushes."

"It's not a cru- Bad you're making this sound so much worse," Sapnap said. "I've known him two weeks."

"A good two weeks though, I'm sure," Skeppy added.

"A special friend?" Dream smirked, noticing just how red his best friend's face had gotten. "How come I didn't know about this?"

"You were busy," Sapnap said. "And it's not a big deal, I just- I know him."

"The archivist?" Dream said.

"Yes." Sapnap rubbed the back of his neck and grimaced. "Hypothetically, if we were to go with this plan and need to access the unrestricted archive under the radar- he may, he might- he might do me a favor," He stuttered.

"Sapnap if it's making you super uncomfortable, we don't have to," Dream said.

"No, no, it's fine," Sapnap said. "I wanna help, so we could go see him. Today. If you want to. I mean, he's there every day. Except for 12:30 to 1:30, he goes to lunch with his friends- but sometimes he eats lunch at the archives so-"

Dream chuckled at the sight of his stuttering friend, clearly nervous at the thought of- I don't even know. Nervous about everything. At maybe seeing the Archivist again, or maybe having the archivist meet Dream? Or maybe overestimating their bond and scared that he'll say no to the favor.

Dream felt a little guilty still. He'd been so wrapped up with trying to find George that he'd completely miss his best friend's life and happenings, the important things that clearly his other teammates knew about.

"We can go today if you'd like," Dream said kindly. "Apparently I've been temporarily decommissioned from the Davenport case via Bad so, whenever you want."

"Okay," Sapnap said with almost like a nervous chuckle. "Okay, I'll text him."

Quackity's eyes playfully widened as he stared at Dream, both having a silent conversation about the clearly, puppy-lovin' Sapnap. Dream chuckled again before looking back at a knowing Bad and an equally amused Skeppy.

Seeing as they don't really have a set 9-5 job, they had a calm and peaceful breakfast before going before getting on with their day. Quackity, having gone to Bad's house in the car with Sapnap, has now been passed over to third-wheel Skeppy and Bad for the whole day. They went to the warehouse, which is actually a temporary office. As a team working for Herobrine, they tend to get transferred a lot depending on which Big Bad they're going after, so the organization just rents out an empty warehouse to store their files and weapons and everything in between.

Sapnap decided that Dream needed to go back to their rental house as well, their being him, Dream, and Quackity's place. (Forgive them for not wanting to share a house with a pair of soulmates, they'd rather not hear anything for fear of not being able to look their own teammates in the eyes when the morning comes). According to Sapnap, Dream looked like *'Someone who just crawled out of an abandoned cabin in the woods after a thunderstorm that caused a bear to run into that cabin and fight him.'* and that he desperately needed a shower and new clothes before they go to the Archives.

Dream knew that secretly, Sapnap just wanted him to make a good impression towards the archivist. Dream smirked a little teasingly at the thought of Sapnap, the man who spent a good portion of his life dealing with explosives and illegal weapons, spent 2 years doing literal Black Ops work, especially starting at such a young age- being a hardball as he was- acting like this over a boy.

Then again, Dream couldn't really say much as he had spent the last 20 days obsessing over a sniper and may or may not have been seriously second-guessing whether or not he would run away from the law for his soulmate. ~~He wouldn't.~~

He wouldn't, right?

So Dream took a quick morning shower, got into a fresh pair of clothes, had another cup of coffee, which was disgusting but he needed it and got back into the car as Sapnap drove them to the Herobrine Archives.

It was a very beige and bleak building. It was very sad, granted, the whole point of it was so it would be covert. Sapnap had gotten quieter as they went in through the door, wiping his hands on his pants and fixing his hair multiple times.

"Dude," Dream chuckled. "Relax."

"I am relaxed, what are you talking about?" Sapnap said immediately.

"You're sweating like we just ran track, I don't even think you sweat this much when we were on that yacht counting down a bomb," Dream said.

"Shut up Dream," Sapnap said.

Before they went past the double doors though, Sapnap stopped in his tracks causing Dream to bump into him.

"But like-" Sapnap said. "Don't be weird."

Dream stared flatly at his friend, who just continually staring back.

"I won't be weird," Dream sighed.

"Better not, bitch," Sapnap said aggressively causing Dream to laugh.

Sapnap swung the door open and revealed a long hallway with a large dark oak desk at the end of it. Behind the desk was a boy, lounging casually, headphones probably blasting the loudest music imaginable since he didn't even look up. Feet on the table as he carefully painted his nails, wearing the most bright multi-colored hoodie that really puts him a little too obviously out of place in a beige room full of computers and old files. Dream chuckled when he heard the boy sing the words to whatever song he was listening, bopping his head to the beat without a care in the world.

"That's the archivist?" Dream asked.

"Don't judge me," Sapnap hissed.

"I'm not, I'm not," Dream said immediately. "He's cute."

"Back off," Sapnap shot back and Dream laughed yet again.

"I have a soulmate dumbass, that's why we're here," Dream rolled his eyes. "Get over there."

Dream shoved Sapnap, causing him to stumble forward after he swatted Dream off. It was at this point though that the archivist finally noticed someone had been there and looked up.

"Wilder!" He greeted cheerfully.

Wilder. Somewhere within that one word Dream finally realized that maybe this is a little more than a crush. It was a very quick two weeks, but Herobrine operators don't go by their real names for safety purposes, never mind your *last name*. It's either your codename or your number. It's either Sapnap or Agent 20134.

Sapnap knew Dream realized what is currently happening due to him abruptly stopping in his tracks. Truth be told, that's the entire reason Sapnap was nervous. He is currently exposed to being such a simp that he gave the archivist his real name.

"Hi Karl," Sapnap said kindly.

Oh and I mean, the archivist also gave him the same pleasure, so-

"It's a purple day today, how does it look?" Karl held out his hand to Sapnap.

"Looks good, looks great," Sapnap complimented. "Perfect as always." Karl only responded with a smile and scrunched up his nose. "How's your day been so far?"

"Boring, therefore, nail polish," Karl said. "Better that you're here now. With a friend." He peaked over Sapnap's shoulder and smiled at Dream. "Hi, I'm Karl."

"I'm Dream," Dream replied.

"I'm guessing that's the codename," Karl said.

"Yeah," Dream nodded. "Nice to meet you."

"Nice to meet you too," Karl grinned. "What can I do for you?"

"Actually," Sapnap winced. "I need a favor."

"Favor," Karl drawled. "What favor?"

"Incognito unrestricted access to the archive?" Sapnap said slowly. "Maybe a little help navigating it from the best archivist Herobrine has ever seen?"

"I don't know about that," Karl pursed his lips playfully.

"Please," Sapnap begged, flashing him a smile.

"I know your types. If you ask for favors, it's illegal isn't it?" Karl squinted accusingly.

"Most of the things we do are illegal," Dream muttered. "-ish."

"It's not illegal it's more like-" Sapnap pondered, ignoring what Dream said. "-rather not have the big man see in case something or someone we're looking for turns out to be illegal."

"It's going to cost you," Karl sang.

"What's it gonna cost?" Sapnap asked.

"Hmm," Karl smiled, humming as he thought about it for a minute. "To be determined," he said proudly. "You have to do what I ask when I feel like asking for something."

"Done," Sapnap said determinately before Dream could even open his mouth.

"Good," Karl nodded. "Beast's coming in about an hour for lunch we gotta do this fast, let's go," he said standing up, waving his hands around in an attempt to dry off his freshly painted nails.

Karl walked away further back into the room. Sapnap turned to Dream and nudged his head for them to follow Karl. Both of them rushed towards the back of the building, trailing Karl as he lead them towards the oldest-looking computer set up.

"Man, that's ancient," Dream commented.

"The paper files are worse, I've been trying to transfer them all into the newer computers but this still remains to be our most complete database, so-" Karl sat down and typed out his info. "Go off then, what do you need handsome?"

"Well actually," Sapnap said. "Dream is the one who needs something."

"Oh," Karl exclaimed. "Should've told me, I would've asked him for something."

"No it's fine," Sapnap quickly said.

"Yeah," Karl replied. "I like it better cashing in from you anyway," he said cheekily as Sapnap's cheeks turned pink. "What do you need then Mr. Dream?"

"Uhm," Dream said. "I'm looking for a sniper."

"That's one codeword, you have to give me something more," Karl said. "Description, affiliation, a name would be nice."

"His code name is Goggles, apparently his real name is George," Dream said.

"Hmm, keep going," Karl said after typing it out.

"He's about Sapnap's height, dark brown hair, brown eyes," Dream rattled off. "Last affiliated, I guess- Davenport."

"Sheesh," Karl mumbled. "Bad man, bad man."

"Tell me about it," Dream sighed.

"And search," Karl pressed the enter key.

The old computer beeps and loaded and turned as the three men watched the screen intensely. Dream noticed how Sapnap's hand was hanging very close to Karl's shoulder though as if it was reaching out to touch him. Karl sitting back in did just enough to close the gap, Sapnap's hand now laid gently on Karl's shoulders.

"Does it usually take this long?" Sapnap asked after a few minutes of buffering.

"Well," Karl grimaced. "It does if there's not much to find," he looked apologetically at Dream. "There a few files that come on top but they have your name on it, so I'm guessing they were files you submitted."

"Ah yes, my failed 6-month search," Dream said sarcastically. "No, I know everything on there, I need something new."

"I can make a more detailed cross-referencing algorithm from your file," Karl said. "It'll take some time, but I can look for more obscure matches like bullet holes, shooting distance and patterns, little quirks like I don't know- partial fingerprints, shared fiber found at scenes, common sightings, whatever video footage we can find in surrounding areas."

"You can do that?" Sapnap said.

"Excuse me?" Karl sounded beyond offended. "Can I *do* that?"

"I'm sorry," Sapnap blurted out. "I didn't mean it like that."

"You better be sorry," Karl mumbled teasingly. "I got you, but it'll take me more than an hour, should be done sometime tomorrow."

"That's perfect, thank you, Karl," Dream said. "You're amazing, I owe you one."

"No," Karl sang as he swiveled around in his chair and looked up to Sapnap, pointing a finger at his face. "*Sapnap* owes me one."

"Yeah, yeah," Sapnap rolled his eyes but took both of Karl's hands. "Thank you," He placed a kiss on the back of Karl's right hand.

"Watch the nails," Karl giggled softly.

"Thank you," He said again, placing a second kiss on the back of his left hand.

"You're lucky you're cute," Karl mumbled.

"Not as cute as you," Sapnap responded.

"Right," Dream muttered softly. "I will leave you two alone."

"It's fine, Beast is coming anyway," Karl said. "I'll let you know the second I find something."

"You have my number," Sapnap winked before waving his hand and walking out of the Archives with Dream.

The walk back to the car was silent, and when they got into the car and sat side by side, it was even more silent than before. Dream turned and looked at Sapnap, staring at his face. He opened his mouth only to close it again.

"What?" Sapnap said.

"Nothin'," Dream shook his head. "Nothing."

"If you got something to say, say it now," Sapnap said.

"Wilder," Dream said curtly.

"Well Karl isn't a nickname," Sapnap said defensively. "And how do I explain that? It's *pandas but*

backward but not sadnap because that's sad," He said sarcastically. "I was trying to be cool."

"*Wilder*," Dream repeated slowly.

"You already know my real name, *Clay*," Sapnap said exasperatedly.

"No, I know, I know," Dream grinned. "But *Wilder*, I mean- You can find your mother with that last name, you can find your father, your sister-"

"Dream, you know I can text him and call off the favor right?" Sapnap threatened.

"I don't know," Dream sang teasingly. "He sounded pretty excited to get that IOU from you. Not sure he'd want to give it up."

"It's probably going to be something like *play kingdom hearts with me*, or *let me paint your nails*," Sapnap shrugged.

"Oh, that'd make a fun date night," Dream commented.

Sapnap blinked as he silently pulled out of the parking lot and drove into the road. The silence was weird though, and Dream was starting to notice that Sapnap was avoiding eye contact.

"Sapnap," Dream called slowly after feeling the uneasy tension in the air. "You *have* taken him out on a date right?"

"Well, not so much a date-" Sapnap answered sheepishly. "I bought him Taco Bell for lunch one time."

"Taco Bell- Sapnap!" Dream scolded.

"What?" Sapnap exclaimed just as loudly. "I bring him coffee every other morn-"

"Have you asked him out on a date?" Dream asked.

"We're busy, he's busy," Sapnap brushed it off. "And he's got his friends-

"You've never even asked him out on a date," Dream said in disbelief.

"I've known him two weeks," Sapnap said. "And he always talks about his friends like Beast, and Corpse, and Sykunno-

"Other agents. Other agents that he calls by their codename," Dream said. "Not fucking *Wilder*."

"Look, we're leaving NC after the raid, what's the point?" Sapnap said.

"The point is you like him," Dream said. "Don't be a little shit and not ask a guy, who clearly likes you back by the way, out."

"Oh yeah, what do you know lover boy?" Sapnap gave Dream a side-eye.

"Look, my soulmate kills people for a living," Dream said. "Killed. Past tense, present tense, who cares. It's complicated. But I'm still trying to find him," He continued. "But you have this guy that you clearly like, clearly have a connection with and you don't wanna even ask him out?"

"We don't even know if we're soulmates or not," Sapnap said.

"Well you'll figure it out later," Dream said. "A lot of people marry people who aren't their soulmates, it's not every day you own a gun and shoot people to figure that shit out Sapnap."

"Is it even worth it?" Sapnap sighed. "It's gonna be a few dates, then I'm gonna move away, then what?"

"If he makes you happy, hell yeah it's worth it," Dream said.

"Eh... I don't know," Sapnap muttered. "I don't think it's worth it."

"I'm gonna tell Bad," Dream said.

"Don't-"

"No, I'm going to tell Bad," Dream said adamantly.

"Dream, don't you dare," Sapnap said.

"Try me, I'm telling Bad about this," Dream said.

"You're really gonna snitch on me like that?" Sapnap said.

"Yes! You got a cute guy who likes you and you like back, just ask him out, holy shit," Dream said. "I'm surprised you haven't done it already with the bedroom eyes, the hand-kissing, the flirting-"

"That's all just play. It's a show!" Sapnap insisted.

"Good luck convincing Bad that," Dream smirked.

If anyone can talk some sense into Sapnap- it's Bad. Best be sure that's exactly what happened when Bad heard.

"Awh," Bad cooed. "Sapnap he sounds really nice! It seems like you like him a lot."

"No shit Sapnap likes him, he's writing up an algorithm to comb through thousands of records and files," Quackity said. "And he doesn't even know Dream. He likes Sapnap back, *apparently*."

"Sapnap you should go out with him," Bad said. "Oh! Oh! Invite him down for dinner, me and Skeppy will cook for everyone."

"Family dinner," Skeppy nodded.

"No, no-" Sapnap rushed. "No family dinner bullshit, we're not there yet."

"Not there yet- Sapnap you're *nowhere*, that's the problem," Dream said.

"Dream shut-" Sapnap groaned exasperatedly.

"Sapnap you should ask him out," Bad said. "Who cares if we're leaving NC afterward, it's not like you can't hold a long-distance relationship."

"Long-distance relationships don't work," Sapnap mumbled.

"It can if you're not so whiny," Dream muttered. Sapnap glared at him and Dream just shrugged.

"It's a date, what's the harm?" Skeppy said. "Besides, he works for Herobrine, he'll understand the schedule, the travel, the work-"

"You're going to ask him out," Quackity said sternly. "If you don't, I will."

"Alright, alright!" Sapnap gave up. "Can we not talk about this when we're like, 3 minutes away from the Feds coming down?"

Oh right. About that.

Despite going to the warehouse directly from their trip to the Archives, Dream had failed to bring up or mention Karl at all. They were thrown into last-minute preparations for the raid, with last-minute messages from an undercover local police that threw their investigation in a loop. Of course, Sapnap would be caught dead if he were the one to mention things so he kept quiet, leaving it off to Dream forgetting.

Dream, however, chose to *not*-forget when they're staking out in their van, waiting a block away until their raid party shows up. And I guess they're talking about it now.

"Four Fed and two SWAT cars are heading over in T-15 minutes," Skeppy read off the screen.
"Along with 7 local cop-cars."

"Fifteen?" Dream furrowed his eyebrows. "They're late."

"Yeah, my god," Quackity criticized. "You'd think with a raid this big, they'll be on time for something."

"They still in there?" Dream asked Bad.

"They should be," Bad said looking at the computers inside of the van. "We haven't seen any traffic, no cars in or out, but it does seem kind of quiet."

"The Feds just took a U-turn. Where are they going?" Skeppy rolled his eyes.

Suddenly, Sapnap's phone started to ring.

Sapnap froze and pretended to ignore it.

"Are you going to get that?" Bad asked.

"No," Sapnap shook his head.

"Is that who I think it is?" Quackity grinned.

"No," Sapnap said again.

"Gimme the phone," Dream said.

"Fuck off Dream," Sapnap hissed.

"He said he'd call about George," Dream said. "George is *my* problem."

"No," Sapnap said.

"Give-" Dream dove across the van and tried to take the phone by force.

This was immediately followed by a lot of screaming and yelling and fighting inside the tiny van.

"Hey, hey-" Skeppy yelled, but the phone kept on ringing.

"Dream, you nosy son of a-"

"Hello?" Quackity had taken the phone and answered.

"H-hello?" Karl's voice sounded unsure. "Sorry, I think I got the wrong number.

"No, no, I'm Q," Quackity said. "You're looking for Sapnap."

"Quackity!" Sapnap hissed. Even though the phone was in neither of their possessions, Dream and Sapnap were still struggling with each other.

"Yes, I am," Karl said cheerfully. "You're a teammate I presume."

"Yes, yes I am," Quackity said. "He's a little preoccupied, I could pass on a message."

Sapnap was currently in a chokehold by Dream as they both swatted each other and fought each other off.

"Well I have something that he's gonna like," Karl said.

"I do hope it's your phone number," Quackity said.

"He already has my phone number," Karl said innocently.

"Well then I hope it's a date with you," Quackity said.

"Alex!" Sapnap exclaimed angrily as Bad finally pulled Dream off Sapnap just in time for Sapnap to grab the phone off Quackity's hands. "Karl, ignore everything he said, I'm so so sorry," Sapnap rushed.

"Oh hi Wilder," Karl sounded startled at the change.

"Hi," Sapnap sighed softly.

"He didn't say anything weird," Karl said. "Don't worry about it."

"Sorry, they're a bit much," Sapnap apologized.

"You don't have to keep apologizing," Karl laughed. "I just found something you might like and it's not my phone number."

"But I have your phone number," Sapnap mumbled slowly before glaring at Quackity.

"That's what I said," Karl agreed. "Anyway, I was digging up case files from two years ago, and there was a string of 7 heists across Europe, specifically Denmark, Norway, Sweden, UK, Spain, Netherlands, and Belgium."

"Wait, I think I've heard about that," Sapnap said.

"Cars are coming," Skeppy said. "We gotta jump into action."

"Of course you've heard about that," Karl laughed. "Dude it was everywhere, and it was so weird. They took a piece of the crown jewelry from every single remaining monarchy in Europe."

"Right, right," Sapnap said.

"Sapnap, we gotta go," Dream said but Sapnap simply waved his hand off.

"And all of the heists were elaborate as heck, but even at the displays and vaults, they only took one piece. Even if they had access to 3 crowns, they took one. Even if they had access to more expensive things, they took something else that was less valuable," Karl said.

"Huh weird," Sapnap mumbled.

"Sapnap," Quackity yelled. "Feds are here, let's go!"

"Am I disturbing something?" Karl said. "Are you busy?"

"No, no, please go on," Sapnap answered calmly.

"So they took a bunch of things, right? They took the orb from the UK, the scepter from Spain, a crown from Belgium-" Karl rattled off, but the phone was pulled away by force from Sapnap's hand. Sapnap wanted to object but Bad only put a finger up.

"Hi Karl, my name is Bad," Bad said. "Another of Sapnap's teammates, I'm just going to need you to hang on for a minute."

"Oh okay," Karl piped up. "Nice to meet you."

"Wonderful to meet you too," Bad said as he placed Sapnap's phone on top of his laptop and began typing.

"What are you doing?" Sarnap asked and Bad just ignored him and continued typing a bit more before finally finishing and gave the phone back to Sarnap. "Hello?"

"Hello?" Karl echoed back though his voice now came through Sarnap's earpiece after Bad rerouted the phone call.

"We gotta go," Bad insisted still. Better to have a half-occupied Sarnap than no Sarnap at all.

"Thanks," Sarnap smiled at Bad, placing his phone in his pocket before following his team out. "What were you saying?"

"Stole a bunch of stuff- a hair ornament from Denmark, a sword from Norway, a key from Sweden, and a necklace from the Netherlands," Karl continued. "Every single Monarchy and it was one unique piece from each of them."

"How is this relevant?" Sarnap asked.

"Okay now, it's a little bit of a stretch-" Karl admitted. "In three of the crime scenes, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden, they found a stamped out, custom caliber bullet. All the shell casing has got a little crown indent on them."

"Sarnap," Dream passed over a rifle and a vest which Sarnap accepted absentmindedly.

"Is he still on the phone?" Quackity whispered.

"Okay, custom weapon," Sarnap replied. "Did you find anything about it?"

"Yeah, I rerouted his comms," Bad said.

"You coddle him," Skeppy looked at Bad in judgment, and Bad only sighed in reply.

"Let's just go," Dream said.

"Are you sure I'm not disturbing you?" Karl asked.

"No, not at all," Sapnap said, strapping in his vest before holding his rifle steady.

Out of sheer willpower, Sapnap had split his brain in half and used one to half to watch Dream's hand signals as he lead the rest of the party out on foot to the warehouse, the other half of his brain was still listening to Karl talk.

Dream had some gesture that he gathered to be, *go 'round back, take them down, leave the merchandise to the locals*. Sapnap followed Quackity and the two made their way back.

"Three out of seven isn't the majority, but in Netherlands and Norway, they found the same shoe prints on what they think would've made a good nest," Karl said. "So I'm willing to bet your sniper is in at least 2 out of the 7 heists, but by how their team worked, probably all 7 heists."

"How do you know the bullets correlate to the sniper again?" Sapnap asked.

"Get down!" Sapnap heard a voice yell from across the warehouse as the North East side corner exploded pushing Sapnap back and onto the ground. Rifles up, and they began shooting.

"Sapnap?" Karl called.

"Give me a minute, give me a minute," Sapnap said kindly as he pulled Quackity and ducked behind what was clearly a crate of off-shore produces guns.

"Okay," Karl said softly. "Stay safe."

"My middle name-" Sapnap felt a splash on his foot and took in a whiff of gasoline. "-is safety."

"The fuck?" Quackity looked absolutely bewildered at his friends.

"Keep going, keep talking to me," Sapnap urged as he and Quackity rushed away from the fire crawling back.

"They're planning on blowing the place up, they prepared," Dream's voice spoke over Karl's voice in Sapnap's earpiece. "They're going to burn all the evidence and us with it."

"Uhm, uh-" Karl sounded increasingly concerned. "The bullets from the Monarch heist weren't from a sniper rifle, but there have been cases where crown stamped bullet casings were found in a sniper's nest, including your last escapades in Florida."

"Right," Sapnap said as he let off a round of shots towards a few armed men trying to escape in a barrage of SUVs. "So you think-" Sapnap sent a shot towards the wheels. "-there's a chance-"

"They're getting away," Bad said.

"No they're fucking not," Skeppy said. "You coming?" Skeppy yelled, looking directly at Sapnap and Quackity.

"Bad you're covering for Dream right?" Quackity asked as he and Sapnap ran after Skeppy, jumping into one of the detective cars. Sapnap caught a glance of Dream, fighting some guy on the metal catwalk at the top of the warehouse as Bad scaled the wall to get to them.

"I think I should call you back later," Karl said.

Sapnap threw himself in the back seat and before his door even closed, Skeppy was speeding into the road.

"-there's a chance that they're from the same dealer and dealer might know our sniper?" Sapnap rushed. "Do we know who the dealer is?" He asked.

"There did they go?" Quackity yelled. "Right turn? Left turn?"

"All units within 7 blocks of Wake Forest Road, keep an eye out for a black SUV, partial Oscar, Tango, Victor-" Skeppy called into the dealer. "Probably speeding, covered in bullet holes."

"You're gonna want to drive South as fast as you can," Karl said.

"Wait, you've found the dealer?" Sapnap asked.

"No, I found your SUV," Karl replied. "Oscar Tango Victor 8127, just went past the Mordecai Park, right at Peace, and left and down Salisbury."

"Car's going past Mordecai Park, right at Peace, left down Salisbury, go, go, go-" Sapnap tapped Skeppy on the shoulder.

"They missed the first merge, but they're gonna try at the next one, you're going to lose them if they get on the highway-" Karl said. "I'm clearing the road."

"How-" Quackity said, but Skeppy didn't even think twice before barreling down the road. Slowly but surely, every single stoplight they passed through turned green, and Skeppy only took that as an invitation to press the pedal to the metal. "What the fuck."

Sapnap rolled the window down and stuck his head out, sitting on the door as he aimed for the car. The never-ending red light has cleared most of the streets off the cars. One shot went past the back windshield, one-shot missed entirely.

"They're going to try and turn right after the Marriott Hotel, that's how you get to the intersection, you're gonna want to stop them before that," Karl said.

"Can't let 'em get to the highway, it's after the Marriott hotel!" Sapnap yelled at Skeppy.

"If I drive any faster you'll fall off," Skeppy said. "And Q too."

Quackity has followed suit and sat on the passenger side window, guns out trying his best to aim at the escaping car.

"Karl-" Sapnap asked desperately. Truth is he doesn't know what he could even ask for. What on

Earth could Karl do.

"Hang on, you're good, you're good-" Sapnap, amongst the unbelievable speed his car was going, the ringing of gunshots from his, and now Quackity's from hanging outside of his own window, could hear Karl furiously typing. "I'm sending over help."

Sapnap sent off two more shots before the perp he was chasing down started sending off their own shots directly at him. His eyes flashed at the right side of the road, heart dropping to his stomach when he saw the Marriott Hotel approaching.

The SUV made a right turn out of their vision as Skeppy tried to chase it down. Sapnap had to brace himself when Skeppy took the same right turn without even slowing down, he'd nearly fallen out. But then the car went to a sudden stop, jerking Sapnap's head upright.

Lined up on the highway were 4 patrol cars blocking the road, and twice as many guns pointed at the SUV and the people in it.

Sapnap exhaled a laugh of disbelief, looking at Quackity and Skeppy who were just as confused. They watched in silence as the officers started arresting the escapees.

"H-how-" Sapnap said. "How did you-"

"Turn right for me?" Karl requested. "A little more right, more right than that. Pause. Then tilt your head up, a little more up for me. There we go." Sapnap had turned his head following Karl's direction until his eyes fell on a street cam. "Eyes in the skies baby. Smile for me, handsome."

Sapnap was gaping, lips apart, an amused smile on his face as he slowly raised his hand and waved at the street camera, and subsequently Karl on the other side.

"Gimme," Skeppy stole Sapnap's earpiece directly from his ear as he was too busy waving at the camera. Sapnap protested but Quackity shushed him. "Hi. Is this Karl?"

"Ye- yeah?" Karl stuttered.

"I'm Skeppy, now you've met the whole team," Skeppy said. "Listen, I'm cooking dinner tomorrow and Sapnap would love it if you came and joined us."

"Skep-" Sapnap gasped but Quackity only hushed him again.

"Yeah sure, sounds cool," Karl giggled. "I thought he'd never ask."

"Oh he didn't," Skeppy said bluntly. "He's too chicken to ask you out, so *I'm* asking. I just said he'd absolutely love it if you came."

"Oh," Karl said before cackling. "Oh, okay, I guess."

"Perfect, he'll text you the address," Skeppy said. "Let him know if you have dietary restrictions."

"I will, thanks Skeppy!" Karl yelled out as Skeppy handed the earpiece to a curiously red Sapnap. Before it got too Sapnap though, Quackity hijacked it.

"Karlos, that was fucking awesome, you're fucking awesome," Quackity said. "Even if you don't wanna go out with Sapnap- which is understandable- I hope you come dinner tomorrow, we'll have lots of fun."

"Yeah, yeah, I think I'm free tomorrow-" Karl managed to say before Sapnap finally took his earpiece back.

"So uhm-" Sapnap gulped. "The dealer?" He asked nervously.

"The de- oh, right," Karl chuckled nervously. "He's much less of a dealer more of an artist. The Crown stamped weapons are the most dangerous weapons in the market, but they're all handcrafted, all custom, most of the time one of a kind," Karl said. "If your man has the weapon, then the dealer knows him."

"So, do we know who the dealer is?" Sapnap asked.

"No, no one does," Karl said. "We haven't been able to catch him at all, and even if we do, he escapes. We barely know what he looks like, or what his name is."

"That's great," Sapnap said sarcastically.

"But I know someone who does know who he is," Karl said triumphantly.

"That's good, that's good," Sapnap said. "Who is it?"

"That's the hard part," Karl winced.

"*That's* the hard part?" Sapnap groaned.

"Hey, I'm trying my best," Karl said.

"No, no, this isn't a you problem," Sapnap sighed. "It's more of a *Dream's-soulmate-is-an-asshole* problem."

"S-soul-" Karl gasped.

"Oh shit," Sapnap cursed. "Please don't tell him I told you, I don't know what he wants people to know or don't," he begged.

"I won't," Karl said. "You really can't choose your soulmate huh?"

"It seems like you cannot," Sapnap agreed. "So what's the hard part?"

"Right, we have a person in Herobrine's custody, upstate New York," Karl said. "They would know who the dealer is, and adjacent details might even know your sniper."

"Who are they?" Sapnap asked.

"Codename, The Prodigal Son," Karl readout.

"Oh no," Sapnap banged his head against the roof of the car.

"The person who planned the Monarch Heist themselves," Karl continued. "Also goes by codename: The King. Child of Herobrine's own Chief Director-"

"It's Eret," Sapnap sighed. "It's Eret, I know it's Eret-"

"That's not the name listed here-" Karl said. "Alis-"

"Eret's yet another codename," Sapnap said. "I'm very familiar. I may not remember what crimes she did, but I sure hell knows who he is."

"Well that's good then," Karl said. "It'll make our trip to New York easier."

"Our?" Sapnap perked up.

"I invited myself," Karl said cheekily. "Hope you don't mind."

"No, no, not at all," Sapnap said. "I'm glad you're coming, and I'm glad you're coming to dinner."

"Listen-" Karl said. "I don't have to come tomorrow if you don't want me to, I know friends can be a lot, and-"

"No, no I want you to come," Sapnap insisted. "Please."

"Are you sure?" Karl asked.

"Yes," Sapnap nodded, looking up at the street cam. "I don't know if you could still see me, I'm nodding."

"I can still see you," Karl laughed.

"I know it doesn't mean a lot because Skeppy and Q already asked, but would you like to come to dinner? Like, officially?" Sapnap asked.

"Like a date, officially?" Karl pursed his lips:

"Yes, yes, a date," Sapnap said.

"Not because your teammates are bullying you?" Karl teased.

"Not because my teammates are bullying me," Sapnap repeated.

"Then I would love to come," Karl said. "It's a date."

"Perfect."

Chapter End Notes

i mean,

did yall really thought if i were going to make this a chaptered fic, that i'm NOT going to make it slow burn

yall aren't getting george and DNF that fast lol

love love you all, this one's for you because i didn't really have a set plot until all the comments rolled in.

so yeah, comments and kudos are pog,
but hey, sub to the fic now for continuations
Sub to user if you like me :D

and follow on twitter if you want to @noimnotJJ

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

i love reading all the comments, absolutely love love love
thank you for all the support, i've literally never gotten so many twitter dms than this story.

i will be adding tags as they go to avoid spoilers but there shouldn't be anything super bad.

i think I'm going to update at least once a week, or once every two weeks,
but i'm loving the things I've plotted out this far, and I hope you guys are going to enjoy this as well <3

PS. I use Multiple pronouns for Eret so i hope this avoids any confusion if it wasn't clear

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Oh, New York, New Yo-fuck," Dream cursed. "Do we really have to do this? I don't want to."

"Okay, then let's not find your soulmate, that's fine by me," Sapnap said sarcastically. "Do you think I want to see her again?"

"Bad should do this," Dream said. "Bad has more brains. Bad is nicer, smarter, calmer, and better-"

"I agree, I agree, I ag-" Sapnap said.

"If you two even so much as turn *around*-" Quackity said. "I will punch you."

"I'm not a good interrogator!" Dream exclaimed.

"Since when?" Quackity yelled.

"Since it's my soulmate, and it's *Eret*," Dream hissed. "Eret with the eyes, the creepy stare-into-your-soul eyes, Eret with the almost-killed-me-that-one-time."

"Eret that you know- Dream was one of the people who actually testified against him and placed him behind bars, caught him not for the impressive fuckin' heists, but over forging immigration documents, and now has to go ask him for help," Sapnap added.

"Correction, beg him for help," Quackity said.

"You're not helping Q. It's embarrassing," Dream exclaimed.

"Here have a bagel," Karl said handing a warm toasted sesame bagel. "They got caught, how bad could they be?"

Dream looked at him before hesitantly taking it. Dream huffed angrily, taking a big bite out of the bagel in a rage only to be mildly surprised by how good it was. Karl looked proud and simply nodded.

"How bad do you have to be to betray your own family?" Dream said, his mouth full with his second bite. "You do realize they're called the Prodigal Son because their father is our collective boss. And they just so happens to run a crime ring for however long-"

"Casually," Sapnap said. "Casually heists the Regalia of the remaining 7 Monarchy."

"Okay, maybe she's a little terrifying," Karl said. "You got this."

"You know Karl, I like you," Dream admitted. "But you do not know what you're talking about."

Karl cackled as he sat on top of the car hood, Quackity standing next to him. The four of them were stationed outside of a private penitentiary holding for white-collar criminals. Dream and Sapnap had an appointment to meet with the one and only Eret, infamously the Herobrine traitor when they figured out their 17th crime without being able to prove it.

"Where even is Bad and Skeppy?" Sapnap whined.

"They're dealing with the disaster of a warehouse bust that happened in North Carolina," Quackity said.

"I didn't think it ended that disastrous," Karl said with a proud smile.

"Thanks for that by the way," Quackity said. "But it's also a problem that people from the Davenport Op is always at least on the same ground or even one step ahead from us."

"That's the second trap we walked into," Dream said. "At least we arrested a few people."

"Twenty-six to be exact," Karl said. "That could be identified anyway, a few others were ghosts."

"Yeah maybe Bad and Skeppy need to deal with that," Dream winced.

"*Maybe?*" Quackity sputtered.

"I need my emotional support Bad," Sapnap said. "I don't want to see Eret,"

"You always need your emotional support Bad," Quackity sighed. "You're only getting an aggressively threatening Quackity. Get the fuck in there, or I'm going tell Karl here what happened in your 9th-grade violin recital."

"You play the violin?" Karl's eyes lit up.

"It's Dream's soulmates, why are you punishing me for this shit?" Sapnap exclaimed.

"Because I've got nothing to threaten Dream with, so I need you to drag him in there," Quackity said. "It's a win-win."

"Well you got me," Sapnap said, grabbing Dream by the collar and dragging him towards the entrance of the holdings.

"Wait-" Dream said, but he was stumbling farther and farther away from Quackity and Karl.

"So..." Karl drawled. "What happened in his 9th-grade violin recital?"

"You're not getting that out of me, pretty boy," Quackity shook his head chuckling.

"Damn," Karl pouted.

"She's in prison," Dream huffed. "I'm not scared of her."

"Dream, you were never scared of Eret," Sapnap said flatly. "You're scared she won't tell you anything about George."

"And because it's embarrassing," Dream added.

"And because it's embarrassing," Sapnap agreed.

"The things I do for that little shit, oh I'm just about to throw him to the Feds the second I find him," Dream gritted his teeth. "I'm gonna shoot him. I'm gonna shoot him again."

They walked down a particularly narrow hallway, white, painted bricks like ones you'd find in a psych ward. The place was bleak but very clean. The aura of entitlement and privilege could be felt through the walls.

They clocked two security cameras on either end of the hallway. An officer sat behind the check-in desk doing a crossword puzzle.

"Here for the 2 PM appointment with inmate 71-" Dream began as he scribbled his name down on the sheet of paper on the table.

"Oh, I know who you're here for," He answered, putting down the crossword puzzle. "Trust me, I know."

The voice sounded too familiar and Dream immediately felt bad for not even paying attention to the man behind the desk. He'd like to say that in his defense, he was very nervous. But still, Dream did a double-take to look at the man guarding the table.

"Sam?" Dream exclaimed.

"Hey Dream," The man behind the desk grinned. "Hey Sapnap."

"Hey man! What are you doing here?" Sapnap laughed out of excitement.

"Yeah, I thought you were down in Texas now," Dream said.

"Though I'd give the old office a visit," Sam chuckled. "My team's stationed in Vermont for the time being and I thought I'd make the trip when I heard certain someones were playing with fire." He tilted his head and stared at Dream and Sapnap.

"Oh," Dream mumbled guiltily, sharing a nervous look with Sapnap.

"You wanna tell me what's going on?" Sam asked. Dream and Sapnap both kept quiet, not quite sure what to say going forward.

"We're trying to find someone," Sapnap said.

"Right," Sam said slowly. "And you come to potentially the most annoyingly cushioned, dangerous person we have in custody for help."

"Hey if you can find the person, we're good not-talking to Eret," Sapnap held up his hand in defeat.

"And who is this person?" Sam asked.

"You know that sniper that I couldn't find when I was in London?" Dream sighed in defeat.

"Dream-" Sam said in pity, a small smile on his face. "You can't give it up can you?"

"No, listen," Dream leaned over the desk to get closer to Sam. "You heard what happened with the Davenport Op in the Florida docks?"

"Sort of," Sam said, eyes narrowing with interest. "Human trafficking confirmed right? And there was a bomb I think. You guys are handling Davenport aren't you?"

"The sniper was there," Dream explained.

Of course, he'd left out ~~a little detail.~~

A lot of details.

"He's working for Davenport," Sam concluded. *Eh, kind of.* "So you think Eret would know where Davenport is?"

"Something like that," Dream said.

"Information isn't cheap with him, you know that," Sam warned. "You got any bargaining chip?"

"We would love some ideas," Sapnap said. "Look, we don't even wanna see him."

Sam chuckled and stroked his beard, an amused smile on his face.

"Still nervous to see Eret huh?" Sam questioned.

"She tried to kill me, Sam," Dream said. "Tried to suffocate me in quicksand. What kind of kooky cartoon villain does that?"

"Over half of the people in our holding cells tried to kill you," Sam said. "Call it an occupational hazard."

"Yeah, but she was actually close," Dream said. "And she nearly killed you too."

"True, true," Sam said. "God, weren't we lucky Puffy was there?"

"Tell me about it," Dream rubbed his temple.

"Alright," Sam said. "You want me to sit in with you or are you two good?"

Dream and Sapnap shared yet another glance as Sam twirled the keycard between his fingers. There was a quick calculation in their brain, both immediately contemplating the offer. On the one hand, Sam, just like them, had first-hand experience with Eret and looked way less traumatized than they were. On the other hand, how would they even begin to explain that this was kind of *not* a Davenport issue and more of a Dream's soulmate issue?

They were not going to tell Eret about the soulmate thing anyway, so might as well get some of that emotional support Sam.

"Please," Dream and Sapnap grinned and Sam simply rolled his eyes.

"Come on, let's go," Sam shook his head as he lead them towards an interrogation room.

Before Sam got his one Herobrine field team, he worked as the Head Warden in Pandora's vault. It really wasn't much of a surprise that they'd just let him walk around with a key card and that he would lead himself and their guest around without supervision.

They entered into the equally depressing room, a few cheap-looking chairs strewn around a plastic table. Sam walked himself to the intercom to send a message.

"Bring him in," Sam said.

Although Sam gestured toward the chairs, neither Sapnap nor Dream were calm enough to sit

down. After a few minutes of painstaking wait, the door finally swung open to reveal a tall brunette, walking in with their hands in handcuffs, wearing platforms that starkly contrast the facility-regulated jumpsuit.

"Hello, gentlemen," Eret's deep voice filled the room as he pulled out the chair with one foot, sitting down before resting his legs on the table. "Dream, Sapnap, and Awesam-" He sighed. "Still alive I see."

"Eret," Dream greeted curtly.

"My friends," Eret sang. "To what do I owe this pleasure?"

"Friends?" Sapnap exclaimed. "You-" Sapnap had walked up to Eret in absolute rage, going up in his face.

"Down," Sam said immediately, hand pulling Sapnap's shoulders back.

"No, he doesn't get to get away with trying to drown Dream," Sapnap said venomously, shaking Sam's hand off. "You absolute fucker."

"I didn't try to *drown* Dream, it was more like-" Eret gleamed. "Encouraged swimming in an unusual medium."

"I suppose you thought sending me towards a lava pool is just a hot tub is it?" Sam said.

"Emphasis on *hot*," Eret said. "You know, in my defense, you weren't the ones they were prepared for."

"And who exactly were they prepared for?" Dream asked.

"For me to know and for you to find out," Eret shrugged. He'd thrown his hands back and rested it at the back of his head, looking as smug as one could possibly be while incarcerated. "Are we getting down to business then? How's life? Any news about anything? I know Sammy-boy got promoted, I don't see you as often anymore," Eret frowned.

"Even if I was still working here, I would not come see you Eret," Sam muttered, bored and calm.

"Ouch," Eret replied flatly. "Anyway, what about you two?" He turned to Dream and Sapnap.

"What's new? Anything interesting? Anything soulmate related?"

Eret winked and Dream felt their eyes peer into his soul. Dread fell upon his entire body. He felt the turn of his stomach, the sweat at the back of his neck. She knows, she knows. There is no way she kn-

"How's Bad and Skeppy?" Eret asked and Dream could feel himself physically relax. "Married yet?"

"No," Dream answered.

"What about you and Sap? Found your soulmates yet?" Eret teased.

"We're not here to catch up with you," Sapnap snapped.

"Well, why else would you be here?" Eret feigned innocence.

"We need information," Dream said.

"Oh, that's disappointing," Eret crossed his arm. "What could you possibly need from me?"

"We're looking for a sniper, particularly one you've worked with," Sapnap said.

"Okay," Eret pursed their lips. "Would you like that list color-coded and in alphabetical order?" He said sarcastically. "Or maybe sorted by location?"

"Told you," Sam mumbled. "He's never going to tell us shit."

"You are so smart Sam," Eret gushed. "Listen, I snitch on you guys because you guys are the good guys. I know that. For every crime I did, you still won't kill me."

"Well Herobrine won't kill you, but *I* am a whole different issue," Sapnap growled.

"C'mon Sappy Nappy," Eret cooed. "I didn't even try to kill you."

"You locked me in a mineshaft for 2 weeks," Sapnap said.

"I gave you bread!" Eret exclaimed. "At least I gave you food," he said. "But listen. Snipers? Like on the street, unregulated snipers? They're going to kill me. And I've worked with dozens."

"We want one sniper," Dream said. "I think he worked with you in the Regalia Heist. We had his codename down as Goggles."

"Goggles?" Eret perked up. "You're looking for *404*?" He laughed out loud. "Good luck with that."

"40- what's that? What's 404?" Sam leaned forward.

"That's his codename," Eret explained. "Or nickname I guess."

"I thought he doesn't go by codenames," Sapnap said.

"Well not for himself, but friends give friends nicknames, no?" Eret said.

"Why is he called that?" Dream asked out of pure curiosity.

"404," Eret smirked triumphantly. "Error not found. Color not found. Goggles not found. Not found," he chuckled. "Like I said, good luck with that."

"There's gotta be something you want for that information," Sapnap said.

"Yeah, probably," Eret shrugged. "And we're pretty good friends, I feel like he'll forgive me for selling him out for like a sauna or something," he agreed.

"Then tell us what you know," Sam insisted. "I can get you a sauna."

"Ah," Eret winced. "The problem with 404 is that I know nothing about where he is."

"He was in Florida three weeks ago," Dream said.

"Good to know, you already know more than I do. I don't think he's ever been to Florida," Eret said gleefully.

"Any guesses where he's going to go next?" Dream asked.

"Beats me," Eret crossed his arms. "Like I said, I don't know anything," he chuckled. "And I'm not even *trying* to lie, 404 is just like that."

"Dream can I talk to you outside?" Sapnap said. "Just a second."

Dream looked at Sam who nodded before leaving Sam and Eret in a room alone, following Sapnap out to the hallway.

"You mean to tell me-" Sapnap fumed. "Your *soulmate's* codename, is based on his reputation of not being able to be found?" He whispered angrily.

"Hey! It might also be for the color not found thing," Dream whispered back defensively to which Sapnap stared at him flatly. "I'm kidding, that was dumb."

"We're not going to get any information from them," Sapnap sighed.

"Well back to plan A, we're not looking for George, we're looking for the dealer," Dream said. "Let's get back in there before Eret does something."

"Before *Sam* does something," Sapnap shuddered. Dream nodded before heading back into the interrogation room.

"All I'm saying is that the Redstone vault locks goes through a double loop to activate but only one loop to deactivate-" Eret said. "That seems like a system flaw Samuel."

"Yes, but it's two different loops, two different commands that equal roughly to the same time when executed-" Sam explained. "Why am I talking to you about this?"

"We're looking for a dealer," Dream cut in through the conversation while Sapnap was left confused.

"Changed strategies have you?" Eret replied. "Also it was awfully rude of you to interject my wonderful conversation with Sam."

"We're looking for a dealer," Dream repeated.

"I don't do drugs," Eret said, his nose scrunched up in disgust. "That's street level."

"Weapons," Dream said. "The Crown stamped weapons."

"Ohohoho no," Eret laughed out loud, shaking his head. "Hell no. I'm not selling that guy out. I've joked about getting killed but him- he'll actually do it with zero hesitation. *Negative* hesitation."

"There's got to be something you want for that information," Sam said.

"Well," Eret contemplated. "What do you reckon is of equal value with my life?"

"You're being dramatic," Sapnap rolled his eyes.

"Dramatic?" Eret's eyes narrowed. "Listen. With 404, I'd sell him out. I would. I just don't know anything about his whereabouts. With the weapons guy?" They scoffed. "You guys don't even know his code name, that why we call him *weapons guy*. He's a ghost, and rightfully so. I have some information, but do I want to give it out? Not particularly."

"What's it cost?" Sam asked flatly.

"Release for good behavior," Eret shrugged. "If I'm going to get murdered, I want it to be out there in the world, not in here."

"You're never getting out Eret," Sam shook his head.

"Oh well, back to my king-sized bed, hot meals 3 times a day, ice cream on the weekends, internet and cable TV privileges it is," Eret shrugged. "A sauna isn't worth my head on a stick."

"Well, something must be," Dream said.

"Release with parole," Eret bargained.

"You're not getting out of here Eret," Dream repeated the same sentiment.

"Look, there's nothing you could offer me in here that'll make me sell *weapons guy* out," Eret said.

"You're not getting out," Sapnap said.

"You know, in the Bible-" Eret muttered bitterly. "The father *forgives* the Prodigal Son."

"The Prodigal Son wasn't a World-Class criminal, he just had a spending problem," Sam rolled his eyes.

"Awh, you think I'm World Class," Eret cooed. "Thanks, Sammy."

"You also have a king-sized bed-" Sam stared at Eret in disbelief, and Eret just smiled smugly.

"There's gotta be something you can give," Sapnap said. "Dude, I'm so tired."

"Nothing," Eret mumbled. "Can't think of anything."

"We can't release you," Dream said. "Nothing is worth that."

"Why not?" Eret sounded a little whiny. "I've been a good boy. Never mind my father not-forgiving me like a good Catholic man, I've been good! I won't steal another crown, I promise."

"Eret, we can't," Dream said.

"Pandora's vault is such a bleak existence, man," Eret slid down and lounged back in the chair. "I just want out."

"Oh god," Sam placed his head in his hands. "I know what you want." Sam looked up to see Dream and Sapnap's confused faces.

"Freedom," Eret answered adamantly.

"Nope. A little compromise that'll buy us *something*," Sam said. "I remember from my time here." Sapnap

"Alright," Eret said, leaning forward on the table, clearly intrigued. "Surprise me."

"You're not getting out," Sam clarified. "But we could get you transferred to our sister facility in California."

Eret's eyes lit up as a smile formed on her face. She bit her lip, lulling her head back and forth as she contemplated heavily.

"Change of scenery. The sun. And it's California, you love California," Sam stated. "And your father won't be able to visit you often, so no more seeing him three times a week."

"Well, well, well," Eret muttered. "You never cease to surprise me, Sam."

"How much is that going to buy us?" Sam asked.

"I'll tell you his codename," Eret said.

"That's not enough," Dream shook his head.

"I think it is," Eret said.

"And if it's not?" Dream asked.

"Trust me, you'll know him," Eret insisted. "How about we do this? You show me that you have my transfer paper approved. I give you the name in return, and if it's enough, you transport me. If it's not, we'll negotiate."

"We'll get back to you on that," Sapnap said.

Sapnap looked at Dream then Sam, nudging his head towards the door, telling them to follow him out. Dream left almost immediately, though Sam knocked on the door where Eret had come through, summoning the guards that came and took Eret back out. Eret gave them a silent salute before leaving the room.

"How bad is that?" Sapnap asked.

"How bad is what?" Sam replied.

"You offering them a transfer to California," Sapnap said.

"Pretty unideal," Sam shrugged. "You'd have to be the one to put in the request though, Davenport *is* your mission."

"Yeah," Dream rubbed the back of his neck. "Yeah, I'll talk to Bad about this. I appreciate all your help. You didn't have to drive down."

"Yeah, Jesus Sam," Sapnap mumbled. "Isn't that a 6-hour drive?"

"It's not a big deal," Sam said. "I feel obligated to always be here when it comes to dealing with Eret," He sighed. "I'll be here when you talk to him again, but I might not be able to go with you to California."

"Oh yeah, of course, of course-" Dream shook his head. "Don't worry about it, we'll-"

"We got it, we got it," Sapnap said.

"Alright," Sam bowed his head slightly. "Let me know once the paperwork is done, I can look it over and hopefully everything goes well."

"See ya Sam," Dream and Sapnap waved as they walked back out to the parking lot.

The sun was far too bright for their eyes in contrast to the dim light inside the building. Karl was still on the hood of the car, lying back against the windshield, enjoying the cool breeze of the wind. Quackity had gotten himself on the roof, legs swinging off the side.

"They're back," Quackity sang. Karl turned his head and smiled at Sapnap who was covering his eyes with his hand. "They look horrifying," He muttered.

"What do you mean? Sapnap looks cute," Karl said slyly causing Quackity to scoff and roll his eyes playfully.

"You won't believe who's in there," Dream sighed as he got into the passenger seat of the car.

"Who?" Quackity asked.

"Sam," Sapnap told him as he held the back seat door open, winking at a blushing Karl who grinned back and got in. "Guess we needed a babysitter to go talk to Eret."

"Well did you?" Quackity sounded skeptical.

"Shut up," Dream mumbled. "I need to talk to Bad."

"Alright," Quackity said. "Lets go talk to DadBoyHalo."

"The more time I spend with you guys, it gets increasingly obvious who has the brain cell," Karl muttered.

"A transfer," Bad repeated slowly. "To California."

"Yep," Dream nodded. "Sam, apparently knew exactly what Eret wants."

"I guess that's what working as a warden will do to you," Skeppy said.

"What do you think?" Dream asked.

"It's risky," Bad said.

"Is it?" Quackity chimed. "It's a plane ride and a drive."

"It's Eret," Sapnap replied.

"Forgive me for being ignorant," Karl interjected. "What exactly is the deal with this Eret? He stole some expensive stuff."

"Yes, and when they got caught, they nearly took all of us down with them," Dream said. "We were friends. All of us."

"The child of the Herobrine director went to the same rookie training we did, shot the same guns, ran the same course, did the same missions," Sapnap said. "It's one thing to do crimes, it's another to betray your closest friends and family."

"All because you were bored too," Quackity finally agreed. "That's some next-level sociopathic shit."

"Come on now, she had her reasons," Bad said.

"You're too nice," Skeppy said. "She nearly killed everyone."

"So what are we thinking?" Dream said. "Is it worth-" Dream lied down on the couch. "Is it worth it?"

"I mean," Bad muttered. "It's your soulmate. Your call. If you want to offer Eret the transfer, I think I speak for everyone when I say we'd be there for you and ensure safe transports."

"Like what would I- what would I even put on the paperwork?" Dream huffed and crossed his arm. "Buying information on this weapons dealer that has nothing to do with the Davenport operation."

"I mean," Sapnap said. "Our higher ups are still slightly in the dark and frankly a little confused about the mystery bullets that helped take down Johansen's men."

"-because we conveniently left it out of our report," Quackity said. "So we could do that. Further investigation about the Crown bullets."

"I didn't put the Crown stamped bullets in the report, I just flagged it down to mystery bullets that can't be found in the database," Dream said. "I don't know if I wanna put George in the report at all."

"Well," Skeppy said. "Some compromises need to be made. It's a hard decision but it's your decision nonetheless."

"Alright," Dream sighed. "I think I'm gonna go call Sam, talk this out one more time." He got up

and made his way towards his bedroom.

"Don't take too long, dinner's almost ready," Bad called out.

"Guess we're going to California," Skeppy mumbled as Dream's door closed.

"But Dream hasn't decided-" Karl muttered confusedly.

"Yeah, he has," Quackity nodded adamantly. "Yes he has. Guess I'll start packing shit." He stood up from the couch. "We leaving Sunday, Monday?"

"Probably Monday," Sapnap answered, smirking at a generally still confused Karl.

"Karlos, you coming right?" Quackity asked.

"What?" Karl asked.

"To California," Sapnap said. "Would love if you came."

"I have a job," Karl said.

"Your job'll be fine," Sapnap shrugged off. "Come to California with us."

"I took a few days off to come to New York with you guys, also because I grew up here," Karl said. "I can't *leave*."

"Sure you can," Quackity said. "The Archives aren't going anywhere."

"He's right," Sapnap nodded enthusiastically.

"I don't-" Karl said. "I dunno, I can't just leave. I can't even do anything. I'm not a field agent."

"You'll be the guy in the chair," Sapnap said. "Mind you, we need one."

"Correct," Bad said. "Used to be me, but it'll be good to have you around."

"Yeah, we can request for a temporary transfer or relocation, or reassignment," Skeppy said.
"Honestly, the paperwork won't take too long."

"Really?" Karl said.

"Yes," Bad confirmed. "I could put in the request for you if you'd like, just because I have seniority."

"You could do that?" Karl said.

"Yes," Skeppy said. "If you want to."

"You wanna come to California with us?" Sapnap asked, his hand slowly taking Karl's and gently squeezing it.

"It'll be fun," Quackity sang.

"It will be, wouldn't it?" Karl asked and Sapnap grinned. "Okay, I'll uh- I'll talk to my supervisor, and uhm- I don't know what you'd need to do, Bad?"

"Don't worry about it," Bad smiled. "We got it."

"Thanks!" Karl said cheerfully.

Behind him, however, Sapnap looked at Bad and mouthed out a large *'Thank You'*, unbeknownst to

Karl. Bad looked at the both of them and chuckled.

"You're welcome," Bad replied to the both of them.

Dream's bedroom door opened and he walked out, smacking his phone against the palms of his hands, biting his lips as he thought things through.

"I think I'm going to do it," Dream declared.

"Yeah we know," Sarnap chuckled. "Monday?"

"Monday," Dream agreed.

"Karl's coming," Quackity informed him.

"Cool. Might as well make use of the space on the plane," Dream said. "I'll do the paperwork after dinner, I'm starving."

Dream spent the rest of the night just casually hanging out in the Airbnb his team had rented out specifically for this New York trip. There was some paperwork that needs to be done, and by some, it was actually close to 14 pages, but it was necessary.

If anything at least he'll get the weapon dealer's name.

He's just moving Eret to California. Nothing's gonna go wrong right?

"Here, have some shrimp," Eret offered as he held up his plate in front of Dream.

The Prodigal child had gotten themselves a transfer, and not only that but the best transportation available to mankind. Guess that's what happens when your father is the one that puts you in prison.

Dream and his team, Karl included, now found themselves on a private jet flying them from New York to California. Six secret agents and one uncomfortably unbothered World-Class criminal stuck in a plane cabin for a 6-hour plane ride.

At least they have flight service.

"Please, what about some bubbly?" Eret said.

Dream looked at the flight attendant with the most bewildered- most perplexed- most bamboozled look on his face. No judgment towards the young lady, but how- why is there even-

"It's really good champagne," Eret continued. "What about caviar? I think we might have-"

"Eret," Dream growled. "Please stop."

Dream turned his head to look at Quackity who mouthed '*Caviar*?' and Karl just shrugged at him. Sapnap had fully tuned out Eret since the start of the flight, choosing to drown them in really loud music through his headphones. Bad and Skeppy were just there, finishing up Karl's paperwork for a transfer.

"I'm trying to be a good host," Eret shrugged.

"You are not the host, you are literally in transport into another penitentiary, how did you get a flight attendant and in-flight three-course meal?" Dream exclaimed.

"I requested it," Eret grinned. "We have dessert too, you should take advantage of this."

"Eret-" Dream said exasperatedly.

"Yes?" Eret replied with glee.

All day since the trip started, Dream had felt his gut twisting and turning. Something bad is going to happen and he knows it. Sam had escorted them from Pandora's Vault all the way to the plane runway before he bid them goodbye and drove back to his team.

There was something about the look that Sam gave Eret before he left, whether distrust or disgust, judgment or something else entirely that Dream could not decipher, made him more nervous than he's ever felt.

"So Dream," Eret said teasingly. "Anything you'd like to tell me? We should catch up. You didn't want to catch up when we were in Pandora's vault."

"Yes, and I have no interest in catching up with you now," Dream answered curtly.

"Hurtful," Eret mumbled. "I was just wondering you know, maybe there are some new developments in your love life? I'm a sucker for romance."

Dream froze in his seat, recovering quite quickly as to not give anything away.

"Now why would I tell you that?" Dream said.

"Ah so there is something," Eret gasped.

"That's not what I said," Dream replied.

"Yes, but that's what you meant," Eret said triumphantly. "Could it have something to do with trying to find 404?"

Now this time, Dream could not even hide how he froze up almost instantly. He watched as Quackity's eyes furrowed before he looked away, trying to hide his expression. Karl immediately busied himself with his phone while Bad and Skeppy stopped their writing. Sapnap was the only one still out of tune with the conversation.

"Did he try to shoot your girlfriend or whatever?" Eret continued.

There was a collective sigh of relief though unnoticeable to Eret.

"Don't have a girlfriend," Dream said. "And I have nothing to say to you."

"Well you won't talk, you won't eat," Eret said. "Frankly I'm a little bored," She continued. "We

have desert too," Eret suddenly changed the course of the topic. "Pies and cupcakes. How 'bout we bring them out for everyone?" He looked at the flight attendant and nodded, which she returned before leaving to get the food.

"Please stop trying to feed us," Dream sighed.

"I know you haven't had lunch Dream," Eret said. "Please, I insist."

Plates of apple pies and chocolate frosted cupcakes were brought out and handed out to the team. Karl was hesitant to do anything about it, which Sapnap just stared at his plate and then at Dream. Granted, everyone was kind of staring at Dream waiting for some kind of reaction when the plate was placed in front of him.

Dream was sitting right across from Eret. Why had he subjected himself to looking at Eret for 6 hours? Because he wanted to make sure Eret can't and isn't doing anything.

"It's apple pie," Eret sang.

Dream rolled his eyes and grabbed a fork before taking a bite out of the pie. He hated the fact that the pie was really good. Truthfully though, he only ate to appease and possibly distract Eret from the whole soulmate problem.

"There we go," Eret said. "Everyone should eat, it's almost time to land."

None of them ate past a few bites on the accords that it was still kind of awkward. They were starving, they'll give you that, but they would rather wait until the plane landed and get food in California.

And so they finally landed.

They ended up traveling in two SUVs. Bad and Skeppy took one, trailing the main SUV that has the other 4 agents and Eret.

Eret looked pretty relaxed for someone in the middle seat at the middle row of the car, quite literally surrounded by agents. To his right was Dream and to his left was Karl.

That's the weird part, Eret was always calm. Eerily calm.

"Quackity, you wanna check where Bad is? I can't see his car," Dream said, looking back through the rearview window, noticing that the SUV had disappeared at some intersection before.

"Yeah I'm texting Skeppy right now, they're not answering," Quackity replied.

"They're supposed to be tailing us," Dream said. "Where'd they go?"

"Do you think I'd get a window in my room so I can bask in the sun?" Eret asked innocently in the middle of the conversation.

"I'm sure if you requested it they'll break through the six-inch concrete with steel reinforcement to please you-" Dream muttered sarcastically. "-your majesty," he added in a mocking tone.

"You're right," Eret said. "Shame I won't be there to use it."

"What?" Dream said.

"Oh nothing," Eret sang.

"What are you-" Sapnap spoke for the first time, looking back to glare at Eret from the driver's seat

"Sapnap watch ou-" Quackity said hurriedly.

They heard a sickening thump in the middle of the confusion, Sapnap pressed on the breaks and the car came to a stop.

"Did you just hit someone?" Eret asked in amusement.

"Hang on, I'll go check," Karl offered as he got out of the car, Sapnap quickly following suit.

A brunette boy laid on the street unconscious, directly under the front of the car. His shirt was stained by the plates of the car as he laid on his side having passed out from the impact.

"Sapnap, call for medic," Karl said as he crouched next to the boy.

"That won't be necessary," A voice just out of the left of their vision said.

Sapnap turned to see a particularly tall boy holding a gun before feeling a little prick of pain on his neck and instinctively brought his hand up to his neck, immediately feeling drowsy as his vision start to blur. He didn't even notice the boy on the ground had gotten up, now also holding a dart gun and has shot Karl on the neck.

It took way too long for both Quackity and Dream to realize what was happening. Sapnap had left the driver side door open when he'd rush to check on the victim and that was an easy opening for a smoke grenade to enter the car.

A fume of red smoke filled the car almost instantly, followed by Dream's door opening.

"Whoops, wrong door," A tall blonde boy laughed before slamming the door closed.

Dream was too busy trying to cough up a lung and steady his weapons at the same time when he felt Eret's presence disappear from his side having left from Karl's door side, now empty as Karl had gone away.

"Hi Eret," A voice greeted cheerfully.

Dream escaped out of the car, trying to wipe away the burning tears from his face as he aimed for the culprits. Quackity was on the same boat when he tried to wipe away the never-ending wave of red fumes from his face, escaping to the streets.

They stumbled when they saw Eret, followed by three boys jump into a car that was being driven by a fourth. He saw Eret gave him a salute before the car zoomed away without giving Dream a chance to shoot.

"What the fuck was that?" Quackity was panting, starting to feel the drowsiness and headache fall on him.

Bad's SUV sped towards them not even seconds later, Bad and Skeppy jumping out of their car rushing to the rest of their team. It was clear that something had happened to their SUV seeing how one of their side doors was literally bent inwards with a dent the size of Mars.

Quackity was kneeling over a fully unconscious Sapnap and Karl, struggling to keep himself awake as Dream stumbled forward, face all scrunched up as he leaned on the burning hood of the car.

"Hey, hey, what happened?" Bad asked, immediately throwing Dream's arm over his shoulder.

Skeppy ran and dialed for medic and back up, hands going over Sapnap and Karl's neck to check for a pulse while holding on to Quackity leaning on him, his breath slowing down.

"Where were you?" Dream asked weakly.

"GPS broke and took us somewhere else, and then a car crashed into us and ran us off the road," Bad explained as Skeppy stayed on the phone. "Where's Eret?"

"They took Eret," Quackity groaned. "We couldn't stop them."

"Couldn't shoot them-" Dream managed to blurt out. "They were-"

"Hey, hey," Bad called as he felt Dream's weight pull him down, Dream's feet failing beneath him. "You're okay, you're okay-"

"They were kids," Dream coughed before everything got dark.

"Well, well, well," Eret yelled loudly into the seemingly empty warehouse. "The King is home gentlemen. The king-" he twirled as he walked. "-is home."

"You're welcome, by the way. I got hit by a car for you," The brunette boy said as he took off his shirt, revealing an impact chest plate. "Can somebody else be the bait next time? The chest plate works but it still hurt." He rubbed his torso and neck to get rid of the aching.

"Only works if you do it Tubbo, you look like a nice boy. People pity you," The blonde boy said.

"Oi, that's mean," Tubbo whined.

"I think Tommy meant it as a compliment Tubbo," The tallest boy replied. "You're likable. You look trustworthy."

"Thanks, Ranboo," Tubbo said.

"What? Don't thank Ranboo, thank me! I complimented you," Tommy yelled defensively.

"Right that's the last time you're sending me off with those three Wilbur-" The driver complained as he walked towards the work stations. "They haven't stopped fighting since we got Eret."

"Yeah, what is up with that Wilbur?" Eret added. "Am I not important enough for you that you can't be bothered to come get me and had to send in the children?"

"I'm not a child," Tommy yelled.

"You are quite literally legally a child Tommy, hush," Wilbur replied, walking out of the shadows. "We had to keep cover don't we Eret? Need some new faces on the ground?"

"Fine, I forgive you," Eret simply said as he pulled Wilbur into a hug.

"How's the sleeping dart and the smoke?" Wilbur asked. "Worked well I presume."

"Worked very well," Ranboo said. "Smoke could've worked a little bit faster, but I don't know the lasting effects of them."

"Honestly, neither do I," Wilbur chuckled. "Let's hope nothing is permanent."

"Could also try looking into administering things through patches though Wilbur," Eret said. "I tried so hard to try and get them to eat the food on the plane, they're so stubborn."

"Was Niki no help?" Wilbur asked. "I thought she would've gotten them to eat something."

"Two bites of her apple pie is not enough for a dose of sleeping pills, and not as fast as darts," Eret stated. "Is she's not back yet?"

"Nope," Wilbur said. "It's fine though, she'll stay undercover."

"Oh Jack," Another voice yelled angrily. "You crashed the car, that was a good car!"

"Well I wouldn't have to if you'd just get rid of the second SUV faster," Jack replied. "I was going as fast as I can to go stop the second car and come back in time to get these guys. If you'd just do better with the traffic lights and GPS hacking Fundy, I wouldn't need to-"

"I did wonderful with the GPS hacking, and I didn't want to risk with the traffic lights because Herobrine has access to the traffic lights, Manifold," Fundy spat. "You destroyed the front bumper of the car, this is unbelievable-"

"Relax Fundy, we can get another car," Eret said calmly. "Thank you for getting me."

"Can't believe you managed to make them take you to California," Tubbo laughed. "They're so stupid."

"We're lucky Sam mentioned it," Eret grinned. "Came at a price though. Ranboo, you'll tell your brother he'll have guests coming soon?"

"Oh he knows," Ranboo nodded. "Shame I couldn't be there because they'll recognize me, but it'll be fine. He can handle this alone."

"Well now the plan can actually restart," Wilbur said. "Ready to continue with phase 2?"

"Two years into waiting?" Eret said before shrugging. "We could wait until tomorrow, I just need a rest."

"Oh because her Majesty feels tired after flying on a private jet," Wilbur said mockingly.

"Shut up Wilbur," Eret rolled his eyes. "Where is he?"

Wilbur pointed towards the back room and Eret nodded. He could see the stream of light shining from the bottom cracks of the door before walking off.

"Wilbur, I think I bruised a rib," Tubbo whined.

"Wilbur, could I have a bigger gun?" Tommy asked. "Can I have a real gun?"

"We're not allowed real guns, Tommy," Ranboo sighed.

Tommy and Tubbo incessantly bothering Wilbur while Ranboo sits to the side commenting while on his phone were exactly the sounds that Eret had missed during his time locked up. The fight between Jack and Fundy got louder as Eret walked towards the back door, and even that, he wouldn't change it for the world.

Eret turned the knob and swung the door open to reveal a brunette sniper sitting on the table, wiping down his beloved rifle and scope, away from the noise and people. Eret leaned on the doorway and smirked, waiting until the sniper met him in the eyes.

"You're back," Eret said.

"And so are you," George replied. "Safe travels?"

"The safest," Eret answered.

"Good," George replied curtly.

"You know, the most peculiar thing happened," Eret said. "The whole reason that this is even possible-

"Yeah?" George mumbled.

"Yeah, the whole reason this happened is because, well-" Eret feigned confusion. "It seems to be that someone is looking for you, Gogy."

"*Gogy*," George scoffed in ridicule.

"You're not telling me that the infamous 404, the ghost sniper, the one and only *Goggles* has gotten himself on the radar?" Eret said sarcastically.

"I don't know what you're talking about," George answered calmly although a little too quickly.

"Right," Eret drawled. "They're pretty high ups too you know. Dream- now, Dream used to be my friend back a few years ago. We did missions together, did a lot together actually, training," Eret continued. "And now he's running his own team."

"This Dream sounds like a stickler," George said. "Is he the one that escorted you here?"

"He is, yes," Eret nodded. "He's in California right now."

"Good to know," George mumbled.

"I tried to kill him once," Eret said easily.

"Now that you mentioned it, I think I did too," George smirked.

George was still polishing scratches off his rifle, Eret just looking at him as he shook his head and chuckling.

"You know what happens next right?" Eret asked.

"Yep," George muttered.

"You have faith in him?" Eret questioned.

"Yep," George said without hesitation.

"Alright," Eret nodded. "How much faith?"

"Enough," George said.

"You're lucky your soulmate is cute," Eret stated.

"Oh I know," George sang and Eret simply laughed.

"I hope it works out George," Eret said and George simply nodded slowly. "See you later," Eret greeted before going back to the group of his team, still somewhere between a conversation and fighting.

"No, but all I'm saying is that your insistence to use the name *Tommy* isn't exactly *helping*-"
Ranboo said.

"It's a very common name, they would never find me," Tommy insisted. "It's better than *Ran boo*.
Ran. Boo. Are you from Halloween town?"

"I mean we also got *Jack*," Tubbo said.

"Hey, keep me out of this," Jack warned.

"Alright, alright lads," Eret said. "Phase two will start tomorrow, I expect everyone to be in peak performance."

"Okay, so what exactly is the goal here?" Ranboo asked. "Because I wasn't here two years ago."

"It's simple really," Wilbur smirked and looked at Eret, waiting for the King to finish his answer.

"We're taking down Herobrine," Eret finished.

Chapter End Notes

my boys, my boys, we got the crime boys :3

I am giving you guys george crumbs lol, enjoy it while it lasts

kudos and comments are pog

comments especially, feel free to brainrot in the comments, I've taken a few inspiration from comments (loose inspiration that i put my own spin on and will show up later).

Also feel free to dm me on twitter and rant to me about thoughts and things, maybe a few suggestions. No promises that I'm going to follow all suggestions, but i do love brainrotting with people.

Twitter: @noimnotJJ

Sub to the fic or to user if you want to get alerts when i update. see you all later.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

imma be real with you guys, idk how im feeling abt this update and im nervous because there is SO MANY OF YOU rn and i feel like the standards are getting higher. i hope you guys like this

but here, i offer chapter 4. (sorry it's a bit of a filler - not really) but i got good things planned for next update.

PS. i think most of you have probably seen it bcs i know my numbers went really high after the tweet came out, but if by some chance you haven't: Yoana (@voicefulshelf68 on twt) did a comic strip of this fic. super super awesome, super super grateful for it. [https://twitter.com/voicefulshelf68/status/1384147467604676608] look at it, admire it, follow the account, super dope art. it's super cool and i love it sm.

anyway, enough of this note, hope you enjoy it.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Dream woke up in the hospital with a feeling of hangover unlike one he's ever experienced. Granted, he's never actually had a particularly bad hangover, but the statement still stands true. Dream immediately jolted up, harshly grasping at the hospital bed as he looked around in panic.

"Hey, hey! You're good, you're good-" Skeppy got up from the chair and rushed towards's Dream's side.

Dream's chest was aching, the cold AC air harshly burned as he gasped for air. It felt like his throat was closing up.

"He'll be okay in a minute," Sapnap said, walking over to Dream, taking Dream's hand who was squeezing back aggressively as he tried to breathe. "Q went through the same thing when he woke up, it's something with that smoke."

Dream looked bewilderedly at Sapnap, his fingers gripping harder into Sapnap's hand as he coughed. Skeppy rubbed Dream's back, patting it softly.

"Bad'll be back soon," Skeppy said. "You're okay Dream, just try and breathe slowly."

"Eret-" Dream choked out. Sapnap shook his head solemnly.

"We lost them," Sapnap sighed. "They're gone."

Dream was beginning to be able to breathe again, but this news just about stopped his lungs again. Guilt, embarrassment, absolute unbridled rage of the series events that led to this exact moment of failure. He felt his fingers start to go numb from clenching his fists too hard.

"He's up?" Quackity said, limping into the room, his arm around Karl who was trying to support him.

"Sorry, he insisted-" Karl apologized as Quackity limped forward only to be caught by Sapnap who forced him to sit on a chair.

"Why'd you get out of bed and out of your room?" Sapnap sighed at Quackity. "You're still sick."

"It's not fair," Quackity whined. "How are you two getting dandered somehow better than me and Dream getting poisoned by that fucking red smoke?"

"At least you can breathe now," Karl mumbled. "Jesus Dream, you alright?" He went around and found a water bottle to give to Dream. "Water helps."

"That's true," Quackity said.

"Does it hurt to walk?" Sapnap asked Quackity. "You were still limping."

"It'll wash out," Quackity shrugged.

"How long was I out?" Dream asked weakly, his voice still strained even after chugging down an entire water bottle.

"Two hours," Skeppy said. "The toxins will wash out in about six hours."

"Six?" Dream sounded like he was just slapped across the face.

"Tell me about it," Quackity slid further down on the chair. "My spine hurts."

"What was in that smoke?" Dream asked.

"Tox report is trying to find it, but it was some weird new thing," Karl said. "Some sick and twist chemist I assume."

"When can we leave?" Dream asked.

"When you're better," Bad said, walking into the room. "Once the toxins wash out, you can check out tomorrow morning."

"I'm better," Dream answered hurriedly. "I'm better now, we can go."

He tried to hide his wince as he threw his legs off the side of the bed. Sapnap looked and Dream and went to pinch the bit of skin on his left knee causing Dream to yell out in pain.

"What the hell was that?" Dream exclaimed.

"Increased pain sensitivity on the knees," Sapnap said. "Don't know how it happened or why the knees specifically, but you're clearly, not better."

"He did that to me too," Quackity mumbled solemnly.

"There's nothing much we can do tonight anyway Dream," Bad sighed.

"We lost him?" Dream asked again, his voice barely leaving his throat. Bad nodded, frowning as he looked at Quackity.

"You're not in your ro-" Bad shook his head and focused back on the conversation. "Doesn't matter. Anyway, Dream, the plan was to visit the dealer tomorrow morning. We're good, we're

okay."

"We have to find Eret," Dream said, panic starting to rise to his chest. "I uh, I'll talk to Galecki and tell him it's my fault-" Dream's head was pounding even just thinking about what his supervisor will say about this.

"I already talked to Galecki, Dream," Bad said. "It's not anyone's fault and there's nothing more you can do except rest up."

Dream huffed a deep breath looking at his team until he met Sapnap's eyes, who only stared at him until Dream begrudgingly got back into bed.

"You two Quackity," Sapnap said lowly. "Go back to bed."

"No," Quackity folded his arms. "Can't make me Sapnap."

"I can, and I will," Sapnap said.

"Okay, stop it," Bad said kindly. "It might be good for us all to be in the same room anyway, we need to discuss plans for tomorrow."

"I'll get the nurse to move Quackity's bed in here," Skeppy sighed.

"Sleepover," Karl gushed excitedly.

"Something like that," Dream mumbled. "Anyone has my phone?"

"Yeah," Sapnap handed Dream his phone back. "Someone called."

Dream unlocked his phone and went back to feeling utter dread when he saw the name. He inhaled and held his breathe before hitting redial. It took two rings before the call was answered.

"Dream?" Sam's voice was a little crackled.

"Sam, I'm-" Dream stuttered. "I'm sorry, I lost- I lost him, Sam, I-"

"Are you okay?" Sam's voice was laced with concern. "Are you hurt?"

"I'm okay," Dream said. "I'll be fine."

"What happened?" Sam asked.

"We were distracted because we lost Bad's car, he got run off the road. A kid ran into the street and Sapnap hit him, but that was staged," Dream explained. "Toxin filled smoke bombs and tranquilizer darts, we were down in minutes."

"You got ambushed?" Sam remarked with pity.

"I couldn't do anything, Sam, they were-" Dream gulped, looking at his team around him, half doing their own business, half-listening to his part of the conversation. "They were kids."

"They were kids?" Sam yelled out in shock. "How many of them?"

"Three plus a driver. Don't know how old the driver is," Dream said. "Our problems somehow got bigger and worse, and I'm sor-"

"You're okay, stop apologizing-" Sam comforted. "I'll go talk to Puffy, see what she knows about the kids. You just- get better and make use of tomorrow."

"I will, I will," Dream said. "Thanks Sam."

"Talk to you later," Sam said and the phone call went silent.

Dream dropped the phone on his lap before laying back in bed. The world was still spinning around him as he watched an extra hospital bed get rolled into the private room. He threw his arm over his eyes, trying hard to gather his thoughts for tomorrow.

The thing about tomorrow, or today, to be more precise, is that Dream is going to go alone.

Now, Bad and the rest of the team could do everything in their power to help plan things and create contingencies, but knowing where Dream had to go and who he was dealing with was not going to help much.

His team is currently stationed a few blocks away from an abandoned warehouse in a pretty desolate part of the city. Dream was standing alone in front of a door, unsure of what exactly was going to greet him on the other side.

"You can still hear us, right Dream?" Bad's voice rang through his earpiece.

"Yes," Dream said. "But I can feel the signal jammers, it's starting to buzz-"

"Well you got the satellite pager to send the SOS," Sapnap said. "You stay alive, got it?"

"He's not gonna kill me," Dream said.

"Well-" Skeppy mumbled.

"Oh he might," Quackity responded.

"God, Q, shut up," Sapnap hissed.

"What? I'm saying he might, he's a very dangerous person," Quackity exclaimed.

"Whatever, I'm going in," Dream said.

"Stay safe, Dream," Karl called out.

The door not being locked was somehow more threatening than it being boarded up. Dream carefully made his way inside the dark warehouse, being very aware that the crackling in his earpiece got significantly worse the second he got in the premises.

He squinted, trying hard to look through the pitch black, holding his breath as he stepped deeper into the building. He would never mention it to his friends or even admit to himself that his feet were still aching from yesterday.

But the pain got so much worse when his entire leg tensed up upon feeling a pressure plate triggered under his foot.

He inhaled a sharp breath and cursed.

"Typically people don't just walk into places just because they aren't locked," A voice from the darkness echoed. "That's just a little rude."

Dream sighed.

"Technoblade," Dream greeted.

When Dream got the name from Eret, he cursed the ever-living shit out of any and all deities that may or may not exist on this planet.

Eret was completely correct.

His codename was enough. More than enough, actually, that's how Eret's transfer went through. Even though it was inconvenient and hard, Dream didn't need anything else to find him.

That being said though, Technoblade was unbelievably difficult to find had you not known how to find him. He was so invisible that you need to search exclusively for the blind spots. Instead of an online presence, you look for an empty grid. Instead of card transactions, you look for cash. The absence of any footprint, digital or literal, was the sinkhole in which Technoblade would be found.

And yes. Dream knew exactly who Technoblade was.

"How many people do you have waiting outside?" Techno asked.

"Five," Dream didn't even bother lying.

"Oh? Think you could take me with five extra people?" Techno's footsteps clacked against the concrete as he sauntered to the other side of the warehouse.

"Didn't bring the armada because I'm not here to fight," Dream said.

"Just here to trespass?" Techno hummed.

"Here to talk," Dream clarified.

"Right," Techno mumbled. "Well I had a very delicious lunch, it was a tuna sandwich. I just bought a new monitor for my computer set up. I think I'm going to get myself a dog, how do you feel about dogs, Dream? Last I remember, you were a cat person."

"Techno-" Dream sighed.

"What?" Techno said innocently. "You wanted to talk."

"Think you can call off your booby traps?" Dream mumbled.

"No," Techno answered immediately. "So I was walking down the road, and this guy was holding a foam sword because you know Hollywood Boulevard- and he starts yelling about Blood for the Blood God and-"

"Techno," Dream said. "Please, I'm not here to hurt you."

"You think you can hurt me, that's cute," Techno chuckled.

"Techno, I have an SOS and I'm actively not using it so I can talk to you," Dream said.

"Let me predict what's gonna happen," Techno said. "I let you off the trap, we talk, you get the information you need, you leave peacefully, but then in a couple of days, my base gets an accidental gas leak and blows up-" Techno mumbled. "Or worse, you won't even make it look like an accident and actually send local police to come arrest me."

"I'm not going to have local police arrest you," Dream said.

"No of course not," Techno muttered. "Nothing I'm doing is illegal."

"Jesus, Tech- I don't even care that you sell illegal weapons," Dream exclaimed. "I don't, I don't! Fuck knows I should care, that being my job and all, but I'm just-" he sighed. "-looking for someone."

"Look, if you think I'm gonna sell out Eret after you let him escape, *especially* after selling me out," Techno mumbled. "I'd like to keep that IOU on my belt."

"I'm not looking for Eret," Dream groaned. "God knows I should be, again, being my job- I'm a horrible person."

"Oh wow, he's self-aware," Techno commented.

"I'm looking for a sniper," Dream said. "Our file calls him Goggles, apparently Eret says the streets call him 404, I'm just looking for him."

Techno flicked the switch on the wall, the lights now illuminating a little more than just a shadowy silhouette. He looked at Dream, stared into each other's eyes trying their hardest to read each other.

"Why?" Techno said.

"Because he's my soulmate," Dream replied almost immediately.

There were about a hundred reasons, a million even, why Dream shouldn't have told an infamous, very dangerous weapons dealer the truth about his soulmate. But some part of him wanted to.

Not only to prove himself but also because it's Technoblade.

Techno, someone who once was one of Dream's most trusted friend.

"Unfortunate," Techno drawled. "My condolences."

"Tech, please-" Dream begged.

"I'm supposed to believe you're 404's soulmate?" Techno raised an eyebrow. "Mr. I'm-Herobrine's-best-agent? No, no-" He sneered. "Herobrine's *pet*."

"I know how you feel about-" Dream said. "It's true."

"Right, but even if it is," Techno sounded skeptical. "What are you gonna do? He's a sniper. *The* ghost sniper. He's good at what he does, and you are *failing* at what you do."

"Oh gee Tech, thanks," Dream mumbled.

"I'm not going to help you put the best sniper I've worked with in prison," Techno said. "There's a reason I gave him my best rifles."

"I'm not trying to put him in prison, I just wanna find him," Dream said. "He's my soulmate, I-"

"Romantic," Techno said flatly.

"Look, he saved my life. Told me his name, I just want a chance to see him," Dream said.

"Say that again?" Techno butted in.

"He saved my life," Dream said.

"No, after that," Techno urged.

"Told me his name?" Dream sounded unsure.

"Did he now?" Techno said. "So he *knows* what you do for a living?"

"I would think so," Dream replied.

"Well that's disgusting," Techno sneered and Dream just rolled his eyes. "Say I do help you. What do I get out of this?"

"What do you want?" Dream asked.

"You know what?" Techno snapped his fingers as he spun and walked away. "You can step off the plate now, by the way, there was never anything under the pressure plate, but you know what-"

Dream exhaled a combination of a sigh of relief and an incredulous scoff.

"There's nothing under the pressure plate?" Dream wanted to combust.

"No, are you stupid? Like I'm going to blow up my own property just to kill you," Techno said mockingly. "I have an automatic rifle behind the wall that would've shot you instead. I just deactivated it."

Dream chuckled.

"I missed you Techno," Dream said lightheartedly.

"Of course you do," Techno muttered, brushing it off almost instantly. "I'm going to need a favor

for that info."

"Okay," Dream said hesitantly. "What is it?"

"You're going after Davenport, correct?" Techno asked.

"Yes," Dream said.

"One of his sectors, his weapons sector to be exact, is becoming a bit of a problem for me," Techno said. "I need you to take it out."

Dream stayed silent. A little bit a lot confused about what the hell he's gotten himself into.

"I don't-" Dream mumbled. "I don't get it."

"So," Techno began. "There is a deal happening. Since Livingston's out of the picture- thanks for that by the way- Davenport's gun guy is trying to take over the supply-demand. They're handing off designs to some illegal manufacturing factories that some rich asshole hid in Somalia."

"Okay?" Dream said, still unsure.

"I need you to take them out," Techno said.

"Okay, that doesn't sound bad," Dream said slowly. "Almost like something we would do anyway."

"It is, right?" Techno said. "There is a catch, however."

"You're already asking for us to take out your competition, what more do you want?" Dream rolled his eyes.

"Oh, that's for you, actually," Techno said. "See I couldn't care less if Davenport has guns on the streets- you do though, you care."

Dream inhaled a deep breath as he waited for Techno to continue.

"What I want is actually those plans," Techno informed him. "The gun designs that they were going to give to the manufacturers."

"You-" Dream hesitated. "Techno I can't steal evidence."

"Is it really stealing if they're mine?" Techno said. "I want those designs back."

"They're your-" Dream muttered. "Techno if we raid their deal, the evidence goes on file, and that includes your designs."

"Well, c'est la vie," Techno said. "Feel free to leave, but know the next time someone gets on that pressure plate, they will get blown up." He shrugged.

"I can't help you steal back evidence," Dream said. "They'll be safely locked in our evidence cabinet."

"Safe?" Techno jeered. "No, I know for a fact it won't be."

"God, what happened to you man?" Dream scoffed.

"Me? What happened to me?" Techno asked incredulously, intensely staring Dream down.

"You were one of us Techno," Dream said. "Just like Eret, you trained with us, worked with us- with me- and holy shit, you've gotten yourself a reputation as the infamous weapons dealer and I didn't even know about it."

"You don't know about it because you don't bother to look," Techno said. "Like actually cared about anything but yourself and your career."

"That's not fair-" Dream said.

"Oh?" Techno said accusingly. "You know exactly what happened to me. I left because of Philza."

"Tech-"

"No," Techno shut him down. "After everything, he did for you, Dream, you looked at that situation and did nothing. They made him the scapegoat- they got rid of him, and you did nothing."

"The situation didn't play out like that, it wasn't that simpl-" Dream said defensively.

"You don't actually believe that," Techno interjected. "Come on. The evidence was circumstantial at best, and they've already got Eret, and you-"

"Phil got caught," Dream insisted.

"Phil was innocent," Techno hissed. "And who do you work for again? Galecki?" Techno sneered as Dream inhaled a deep breath. "That's what I thought."

Dream stayed silent, knowing his tension with his old friend, his old partner, his rival was anything if not unresolved.

"Look, you can work for Herobrine, I don't care, that's fine by me," Techno said. "But I'm not as evil as you think I am, and you're not as nice as you think you are."

"You're a gun dealer, Techno," Dream spat. "You put dangerous and illegal weapons on the street, you-"

"And that's where you're wrong," Techno barely flinched at the insult. "I'm not a dealer, I'm a craftsman. My guns are lethal but they're one of a kind. I only give them to people I trust, including your soulmate."

"Yeah and my soulmate is a murderer," Dream said with disgust.

"Your soulmate has never carried out a job where his target wasn't either a sex offender, another assassin, some crime boss, or all of the above," Techno said. "Just because another bad guy was the one who hired him, doesn't mean his targets didn't deserve it."

"Life isn't black and white, we don't get to play judge," Dream stated.

"I agree," Techno said sternly. "So why did they do *just* that to Phil?"

Techno scoffed and rolled his eyes and a silently stoic Dream. He looked on, noticing the bruised on Dream's cheeks, the cuts on his neck. The agent was good, he was a good fighter and Techno knew that. He'd even say he taught Dream most of what he knew.

"My guns-" Techno said. "They're lethal, they're dangerous, they're state of the art. They live with me and the people I trust. They're not meant to be mass-produced. Forgive me for not wanting them to fall into the hands of Davenport *and*-" He emphasized. "-Herobrine, or anyone who isn't me for that matter."

Techno fumbled with some papers and drawings, fixing up his designs as Dream just stood there silently. Techno looked back at him and shook his head ever so slightly.

"Come back to me when you get some sense Dream," Techno said as he started to walk away, leaving Dream still stood in the middle of his warehouse. "It was good to see you again."

For someone who had been very clear that he didn't trust Dream at all, Dream was surprised Techno had left him amongst his prototypes and experiments.

Dream exhaled, somehow feeling more uneasy than he'd felt before seeing Techno again. He walked out of the warehouse, finally realizing that his earpiece had been dead for who knows how long.

"Oh thank god you're alive," Sapnap yelled out.

"Yeah, I'm-" Dream swallowed a particularly large lump in his throat. "I'm fine, I'm walking back to the van."

"What happened?" Bad asked as Dream jogged further away from Techno's base.

"He wants us to do something," Dream said. "In return for the information."

"Do you guys ever feel like our lives lately have just been favor after favor after favor?" Quackity said.

"Look, it's a little bit-" Dream mumbled. "-illegal, so I won't make you guys-"

"Shut up and tell us," Skeppy sighed.

"No I'd like to look into something first," Dream said. "Karl, do you think you can remotely access the archive and do a search for me?"

"Yeah," Karl said. "I just need a not crappy wifi and a not crappy laptop."

"Alright," Dream nodded. "I'm going to need you to look into something for me."

"Anything specific?" Karl questioned.

"I want a list of every single hit that's been taken out by any crown stamped weapons."

"What are you doing on my roof?" Techno yelled as he went out back of his warehouse.

"Hiding," Ranboo answered easily.

"Get off my roof," Techno said.

"Our roof," Ranboo stated. "Is he gone yet? I shot his friend in the neck."

"Yes, Dream is gone," Techno replied. "Which friend?"

"The black-haired one, a little scruffy, kinda big and looks like he used to be a frat boy in college," Ranboo said. "Looks like he can snap me in half."

"Are you talking about Sapnap?" Techno squinted at Ranboo.

"That's his name?" Ranboo exclaimed. "That guy's name is Sapnap?"

"Used to be Pandas, bu-"

"*Pandas?*" Ranboo exclaimed even louder. "Okay, he's a lot less scary now."

"He could still snap you in half Ranboo, you are very skinny," Techno said. "I'm pretty sure he does weights."

"Ah yes, but longer legs means I can outrun him," Ranboo said, finally jumping off the roof to stand in front of Techno.

"Why aren't you at Will's?" Techno asked.

"Wilbur got a phone call and there was a lot of yelling, and Tommy got involved, so me and Tubbo just left," Ranboo said.

"Tub- wait Tubbo?" Techno swiveled around in panic. "You brought Tubbo here? Where's Tubbo?"

"Hey Technoblade," Tubbo's voice piped up from the shed. "Can I have this?" He held in his hand was a spherical metal orb.

"Tubbo," Techno called slowly. "That's is an EMF bomb. If you so much as drop it, the whole

Southside of the city is going to lose power for two days."

"Cool!" Tubbo said. "Can I have it?"

"No Tubbo, you cannot have it," Ranboo said.

"What did I tell you about coming around here?" Techno asked exasperatedly.

"Techno I live here," Ranboo said.

"Unfortunate," Techno said and Ranboo rolled his eyes. "C'mon, I'll drive you back to the warehouse."

"Oh yeah! Eret wanted to see you," Tubbo said.

"Does she?" Techno hummed.

"No Tubbo, I'm pretty sure Eret *doesn't* want to see Techno," Ranboo said.

"Well she's gonna have to see me," Techno said, fidgeting with his car keys. "Get in the car."

"Shotgun," Tubbo called.

"No you are not," Techno said.

"You're so mean Technoblade," Tubbo whined as he got into the backseat of Techno's car.

"Says the boy who has my EMF bomb stashed in his pocket," Techno said holding his hand out.
"Give it back."

"Well technically you didn't say I couldn't have it, that was Ranboo," Tubbo mumbled.

"You can't have it," Techno said patiently as Tubbo finally plopped the metal orb into Techno's hand. "Ranboo you mind getting this back in the shed? I'll just reset all the security."

Ranboo nodded before jogging back to the shed to gently place the bomb back on the shelf full of Techno's prototype. A few beeps from the door told Ranboo he needed to get out as soon as he can before the lockdown protocol went into place. Of course, Ranboo had done this hundred times and by the time the locks engage, he was already walking back towards the car.

Ranboo got the shotgun seat, as per Techno's request, and they drove towards the warehouse, Techno sitting in silence whilst Ranboo and Tubbo talk.

The thing about the group, yes, though Techno's brother Ranboo was part of it, and yes, Techno had known Wilbur for a very long time, is that Techno wasn't a part of it.

He'd made it very clear that all he does is make weapons. He's quite good at it as well, and he lends his guns to them as friends do. He's a big part of their success but he does not want to be involved in plots and plans, and team bondings- no. That was Ranboo's domain.

He's very content with being the Hephaestus of the group, objectively unproblematic compared to everyone else. He just needed people to test out his designs.

So you could imagine his- let's call it seething rage, when he was somehow, somewhat, brought into the conversation.

"You sold me out," Techno hissed the second he stepped into the warehouse. Eret was lounging on top of a table and immediately stood up in alert.

"Techno, Techno-" Wilbur was the one to walk forward trying to stop the unstoppable force that is an angry Technoblade.

"You gave him my address?" Techno exclaimed.

"No, no," Eret said hurriedly. "I didn't, I did not-"

"Six people were outside my base, if they'd seen Ranboo-" Techno said.

"I mean they did see Ranboo, Ranboo shot them," Jack chimed in and Fundy swatted at him to shut him up.

"Do you know the number of things they could've confiscated?" Techno asked. "You would've been fucked. I would've been absolutely fucked."

"Well no, we're o-"

"We could still absolutely be fucked," Ranboo said.

"Watch your mouth," Techno said immediately before turning back to Eret, leaving Ranboo honestly a little stunned he got *Languaged*. "Our deal was simple. Money for guns, guns for feedback."

"Look, any other time I wouldn't've done it. But the opportunity presented itself and I had to take it," Eret shrugged. "Besides, it's just Dream."

"Just Dream?" Techno said incredulously. "You know very well if that man took two seconds to not be absolutely incompetent, he could put you into Pandora's Vault," Techno sneered. "Oh wait-" Eret rolled his eyes.

"Look, you have history," Eret said. "He found you from your existence alone, clearly he knows you well enough to do that," They continued. "Besides, he's not going to do anything."

"Why? Because he's 404's soulmate?" Techno said bluntly. His eyes glanced at George, who was standing near the back with Fundy, looking over some building schematics.

George froze, eyes wide as his head snapped up so fast, looking Techno dead in the eyes. George started to shake his head before-

"He's *WHAT*?" Wilbur bellowed.

Eret raised his hand only to cover his mouth, halfway between sniggering and biting his lip cringing. Techno looked at Eret, finally realizing his mistake.

"That bastard is Gogy's what?" Tommy yelled.

George slumped over and sat on the chair, covering his face, only looking at the bewildered faces through his fingers.

"You didn't tell us? Why did you not tell us?" Fundy said accusingly.

"I didn't think it was important," George said softly as he shrugged.

"No, no," Wilbur said angrily. "You don't get to disappear for a year and doing some freelancing, getting yourself in trouble, then show up two weeks ago saying someone was coming af- oh god he's the one coming after you," Wilbur whispered in annoyance.

"Though in my defense, I am not entirely certain what his purpose is, or what he wants to do with me," George said.

"I smoke bombed him," Tommy said. "I smoke bombed Gogy's boyfriend," He snickered.

"He's not my boyfriend, those are two very different things," George said.

"Soulmate is arguably worse," Jack said.

"You didn't tell your team?" Techno raised an eyebrow.

"Really Techno?" George said sarcastically.

"It's not my fault you didn't tell them," Techno replied defensively. "Besides, unlike Eret, I didn't sell you out," He mulled it over for a bit. "Not yet anyway."

"He's your soulmate?" Wilbur asked exasperatedly. "Really?"

"Oh is he the reason you missed your shot and destroyed the entrance to the Billington tower?" Tubbo asked out loud.

"You missed your shot?" Eret gasped.

"Oh, I saw that!" Ranboo gasped loudly. "It was on the TV."

"Embarrassing innit?" Tommy snickered. "The entire thing shattered and everyone was screaming-"

"How did you even know about that?" George exclaimed.

"It was on the news," Tubbo repeated what Ranboo has said. "-and you were in Florida-" He continued. "I connected two and four."

"He made you miss your shot?" Fundy whispered in disbelief.

"I didn't miss!" George yelled. "Bullet went straight through him, just-" George mimicked deflated gunshot sound. "Look I'm not much happier about this either."

"Wait so you've met him," Ranboo said. "Talked to him and everything."

"Maybe?" George lied.

"You told him your name," Techno mumbled, and outraged yells came from the group.

Wilbur shouting, Funding gasping, Tommy screaming, Jack protesting, Tubbo stuttering and Ranboo gaping.

Eret laughing.

"Thank you, Techno," George muttered. "Seriously, thank you."

"You're welcome," Techno chuckled.

"Unbe-fucking-lievable," Wilbur said.

"Okay, okay, okay-" George raised his hands. "Could we please just forget about that whole thing and get back to the planning and everything?"

"No we certainly cannot," Fundy yelled.

"Oh yeah, by the way, Techno we're taking Ranboo to Vegas," Tommy interjected out of nowhere.

"You what?" Techno said.

"It's part of the mission," Tubbo explained as Ranboo nodded enthusiastically. "We were going to-"

"Stop," Techno said. "You know the rules, no talking about your little things to me, I don't care for it, don't wanna know. Just let me know what you need."

"I'll send you a list tomorrow," Wilbur said.

"Alright," Techno said. "Don't come home too late," He turned to Ranboo. "And you-" Techno pointed at Eret. "You owe me."

"Yes Technoblade," Both Ranboo and Eret said, rolling their eyes for 2 very different reasons.

Techno had made it back to his car when he noticed George running out to talk to him. Techno turned and leaned against his car, waiting for George to come up to him.

"Yes?" Techno asked before George even said anything.

"I uhm-" George gulped. "Uh-"

"You want to ask me something," Techno said slowly as he nodded. "What is it, George?"

For a mercenary that prides himself on not being found and not having a name, Technoblade using his real name was one of the rare occurrences where he much preferred it for the sake of grounding George. The friendship that was developed amongst these two was special, in a way that really was very much unknown when or where it started, and how they've equally earned each other's trust, but neither of them was willing to question it.

Suppose it probably started with the time George nearly died jumping off the Sistene Chapel. Or maybe it was the time where Techno was the one who nearly died jumping off the Sistene Chapel. Those were two separate events that happened two separate days, and yet they both were there both times. Maybe that's where.

"Did uh-" George bit his lip.

Techno raised an eyebrow, waiting patiently as George struggled immensely. Friendship or not, George knew Technoblade is not the type of person you pester about your relationship to.

"Did you have a new gun for me?" George chickened out.

"No," Techno answered definitively. "Now, do you wanna ask about Dream?" He continued knowingly.

George blushed a deep red as he averted his gaze, slightly annoyed at just how blunt Techno was. But Techno has always been that way, and he knew this. George was slightly grateful that Techno didn't let him back out of the conversation he attempted to bring up.

"Not yet?" George asked timidly.

"I haven't sold you out yet," Techno said. "I asked him for a favor in turn for information."

"And he didn't say yes," George muttered slowly as if he was expecting an objection.

"Not yet," Techno replied. "Granted, it's a bit illegal." Techno watched as George nodded his head a few times, trying his best to not look disappointed. "You disappointed?" Techno called it out immediately.

"No, no, I don't want him to find me," George said defensively. "That's why I-" he shrugged. "- came to California."

"Right," Techno drawled.

"But you know him, yeah?" George said. "Like you were his friend. Not like Wilbur or Fundy that just runs away from being hunted down by Herobrine."

"He was an acquaintance," Techno said.

"Is he-" George mumbled. "I don't know- is he good?"

"You kill people," Techno said and George immediately rolled his eyes. He gave George a little smile before nodding. "You could get a worse soulmate," Techno joked. "Could've gotten Wilbur."

"Oh god," George managed to laugh, Techno joining along.

"Anything else?" Techno said.

"Do you think he'll-" George lulled his head around as if he's trying to shake the answers out of his head.

"Like you even if you are a murderer?" Techno finished his question for him. "He is still looking for you, you know that."

George was silent, somewhat unsure about what to do next.

"I don't want him to find me," George mumbled softly.

"Are you sure?" Techno said, taking out his phone and looking at a message he'd gotten a few moments ago. "Because he's really trying."

George's eyes flashed to Techno's phone.

"You have his phone number?" George asked.

"No, but he finds it anyway," Techno said. "You want me to call off the deal? I'm not Eret, I will somewhat, respect your wishes."

"Is it super illegal?" George asked. "What you asked him to do, is it- is it like, *really* illegal?"

"George," Techno said patiently. "Are you worried about whether or not he's actually looking for you?"

"No," George muttered. "I just don't want to go to prison, you know."

"So what you're actually worried about is whether or not he's trying to find you to put you in prison, or because you're his soulmate and he's simply trying to find you," Techno stated.

"I don't like how blunt you are Technoblade," George said, his cheeks burning red yet again before getting the chance to return to normal from before.

"Then stop wasting my time George," Techno's words were harsh but his tone was kind.

The two really did have a weird friendship. Techno shook his head and chuckled as the sniper who was still loitering in front of him like a schoolboy with nothing to do.

"Go do what you do, if he comes, he comes," Techno said. "If not, kill him."

"I literally can't," George said.

"I'll do it," Techno volunteered. "He pisses me off sometimes." George simply chuckled at the offer. "Have your moral crisis elsewhere, you're stressing me out."

"Fine," George pouted. "Are you making me that special lensed scope I wanted?"

"You will get it soon," Techno said. "Are we done now?"

"Alright, alright, leave," George huffed. "Just say you don't wanna be friends and go."

Techno shook his head with a small smile and got into his car, giving George a little wave as he drove away.

He didn't look at his phone while he was driving as that would be irresponsible, but he'd known what the text that was left unread on his phone said. He'd predicted it even.

+1(407)-214-5333
when and where

Chapter End Notes

a lot of you were definitely correct in the comments last chapter, it was techno.
hope you enjoyed this down time bit, you'll be getting some dnf crumbs soon i promise
:D

my update schedule for this is- i'm aiming for every sunday (?) but it may change a bit
bcs i'm trying to grind out for karlnap week, but i should still be able to so once a
week. I also just finished exams so it's looking good.

thank you for all the comments, i genuinely read and love every single one of them.
the theories and discussions (i really read them and i write things either to make you
happy or to surprise you guys) so drop them all below.

thank you so much for all the support (I think this fic spedran stats and is now my
third most kudos fic, second most hits, first in comments, which is wiLD), and i have
close to 700 subs on this fic?? whAt.

love it, love it, thank you guys so much

you can talk to me on twitter too if you'd like (i know i don't reply to all the comments, but i do reply to all dms) It's at: @noimnotJJ

catch you guys next week

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

late sunday update, yikes

this chapter is pretty convoluted, hopefully you guys aren't too confused,

this story is at 800 subs and almost 1000 bookmarks, that's wild!! thanks for all the support

hope you enjoy!!

PS: If you want the ambiance, i was writing this to both Roaring 20s and Crazy = Genius by Panic!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Are we ready?" Wilbur called over the comms. "Everyone in position?"

"Ready," Ranboo said.

"Wilbur," Tommy whined. "I need a poo."

"Tomm-" Fundy scoffed.

"Tommy are you serious right now?" Wilbur rolled his eyes exasperatedly.

"Tommy, we're about to go in right now," Eret said.

"Yeah, I know that, but I really need to go," Tommy groaned.

"Big man, there are bathrooms inside the Casino," Tubbo said.

"You are not going to the bathroom inside the casino," Jack said. "We're on a schedule!"

"Would you rather I shit myself then, Jack?" Tommy asked back.

"Well you should've gone before we left now shouldn't you?" Jack snapped back.

"Well I didn't need to go before, I need to go now," Tommy hissed.

"I think you're gonna need to just hold it in there buddy," Ranboo snickered.

"Wilbur," Tommy whined even louder.

"Ranboo's right Toms, we gotta go," Wilbur said.

"Alright fine," Tommy huffed. "Ready."

"Ready," The rest of the comms chimed in to let Wilbur know.

"Right, position one, let's go," Wilbur said.

As much as the eyes of the law may be looking for Wilbur and Eret, neither of them could resist the temptation of looking absolutely stunning and attention-capturing as they strolled into the Casino.

Eret, with their low-cut maroon silk blouse, patterned black blazer with a pair of flared dress pants, accompanied with functionally short heels, making them as tall as Wilbur. Wilbur wearing a very expensive-looking black coat, a tailored blue suit underneath, barely glancing at the security.

See, when you look like you belong, people don't tend to question it. And it wasn't like the security had the guts to kick them out, or even talk to them actually.

"Fourteen, sixteen-" Eret counted. "Counting eighteen cameras from the North-side wall to the East elevators."

"God I hate Casinos," Fundy complained as he continued to type furiously on his laptop.

"An extra 4 near the Blackjack table, and a grid of 6 on the slot machines," Wilbur said. "Might want to get rid of that while we're at it, just as a clean escape route."

"Well if the boys can start their work-" Fundy said passive-aggressively.

"It's not that easy okay?" Tubbo said.

There was also another reason why Eret and Wilbur needed to peacock around the Casino. They made a perfect distraction for 4 underaged children to slip through people's attention.

Tommy found the first camera, next to the door, carefully ducking behind the patrolling men in suits despite his height, and pointed a little clicking pen-shaped object directly at it until the light blinked red.

"Got the first one," Fundy said. "Wish it didn't have to be within a 6-foot radius to work, but it works-"

"You want to file your complaints to Techno, Fundy?" George's voice startled the whole group. "I'm sure he'd love to hear it."

"No, no," Fundy replied hurriedly.

"You've been awfully quiet George, how you've been?" Eret asked coyly as she hovered over a roulette table, getting a drink with compliments from a man from the bar.

"I'm fine," George said. "Cold."

"I offered for you to come in with us," Wilbur managed to speak softly in the midst of flirting with some girls near the dining lounge.

Wilbur's eyes, however, carefully trailed Jack and Ranboo, both making their way through the Casino, sending the cams' signal back to Fundy. Eret did the same, making sure no one got close enough to spot Tubbo and Tommy.

"I like the roof just fine, thanks," George replied. "I like to be away from the action."

"Hmm," Wilbur hummed. "Says the man who got himself into the center of the mess."

"Shut up Wil," George mumbled, only to be replied with a soft chuckle.

"How we doin' boys?" Wilbur moved on past the conversation. "Fundy?"

"We have 17 cameras logged right now if people can pick up the pace," Fundy said impatiently.

"Okay you do this then van-man," Ranboo hissed. "I'm trying not to get caught."

Ranboo ducked behind the slots, trying to be inconspicuous despite being a literal foot above everyone else in the area. Funky little clicker in hand, holding it close to the camera without actually looking like he was pointing a device that is meant to tamper with security. He looked at Jack, a little farther away trying to make his rounds to quickly log the cameras.

"Nineteen, twenty-" Fundy said.

"You have the rest of the command ready to execute, correct?" Eret asked, gaze counting over the number of guards doing a shift change.

"Yes, yes, of course," Fundy sounded offended. "Wilbur better get ready with the whole acting thing. Remember, the manager's name is Marigold."

"I've got it, I've got it," Wilbur brushed off.

"Done, done, I finished first," Tommy said victoriously. "I did all six."

"You did not finish first," Tubbo was competitive. "I did seven, do maths big man, we have 26."

"I'm done, I'm done," Ranboo said, immediately diving behind a decorative plant to avoid foot traffic. "Jack?"

"Finished," Jack sighed.

"Right," Fundy said. "I'm looping camera feed from last week starting three, two-" Fundy finished his command and clicked enter. "One."

"Uhm, guys?" Karl called out. "Something's happening."

"What's happening Karl?" Sapnap replied almost immediately.

"There's some, I don't know, weird static and uhm, like abnormal signals being sent out on the cams, not sure why?" Karl was very confused, bending forward placing his face inches away from his screen.

"Any immediate issue?" Dream voiced his concerns as he fixed up his cufflinks.

"I can see you, Sap, Bad, Skep-" Karl listed off. "And Q, we're still holding."

"Good," Dream responded. "Q, you're up."

"On it," Quackity ran his hand through his hair as a gesture of false confidence. He ruffled it a little, eyes looking at Bad, standing guard next to the bar, then Skeppy, sitting at a poker table, Sapnap, in position next to the bathroom, then Dream, giving him a nod to start.

Quackity walked down the casino floor, dress shoes far too expensive for his taste clicking against the marble, tailored dark blue suit with golden detailing. An attempt to look just about as important as possible.

Clocking down the woman in a polite black blazer and a pencil skirt with a name tag, Quackity approached her with a smile.

"Hello-" Quackity said smoothly. "Marigold," he read off the name tag.

"Good evening sir, how may I be of service tonight?" She asked kindly.

"I don't want to be *that* guy, you know? But I uh-" Quackity lulled his head. "I had an acquaintance who recommended this Casino specifically because of how accommodating you guys are."

"Well of course sir, we try our best," The manager replied brightly.

"Good to know, good to know," Quackity nodded. "See my friend over there, really important, really private- you understand." He nudged his head towards the general direction of where Dream was standing. "He's wondering if he could have access to that private elevator you have."

"Oh, uhm- uh-" Marigold was caught off guard. "I don't- we don't-"

"Come now," Quackity tutted. "We both know that's not true," Quackity's gaze was stubbornly steady but not harsh. "Look at him, come on, look at him."

Quackity led the floor manager to look across the casino and look at Dream once more. A three-piece suit with velvet lining and a dark green bow tie slightly untied looking like he'd just came from a very, very important event. Piercing green eyes shining above the half of his face that is covered in a sleek black mask.

"Man needs privacy," Quackity said, his hand digging into his jacket pocket. "And he- he's willing to pay for it, Marigold."

Quackity pulled out a black credit card, a get-out-of-jail card that they get from Herobrine, never having to worry about anything should they need to go undercover. His lips curved up in a smirk as he watched her eyes widen at the sight of the card.

"Y-yes sir," Marigold squeaked out. "I'll get security, and the key, and-"

"Just the key," Quackity interjected with confidence. "We have our own security."

"Understood sir, if you'll come with me," Marigold nodded, leading Quackity towards the offices.

Quackity threw a glance back at Dream with a nod.

Success.

"We know what floor they're on?" Dream asked as he waited patiently for Quackity to re-emerge with the elevator access key.

"We know what floor they're on," Bad replied. "One of them at least. Your buyers are in the penthouse. Davenport's man-"

"Woman," Skeppy interjected. "Katrina Marakova."

"Right, Marakova," Bad continued. "She has your files locked in the casino safe. After the transaction, she'll take them and give them to the buyers."

"Remind me again why we don't just-" Sapnap said. "Steal them when she gets them out instead of trying to break into the vault."

"Because once the transaction is over, both the buyers and Marakova and their collective people, are going to go and retrieve the files," Skeppy said. "You wanna fight all of them?"

"Yes," Sapnap said.

"Sapnap-" Karl said warningly.

"Alright fine," Sapnap said. "We got the elevator key, what's next?"

"The private elevator can get us to the hallway, but we need the passcode," Skeppy said. "Bad's on his way to the security room to get the code, but he needs to do so without being seen."

"How long do you need?" Dream asked as Quackity emerged with a smile, the manager still trailing on his side as the two of them made their way towards Dream.

"The codebreaker needs seven minutes, but I might be able to manually hack through in five," Bad said confidently. "I just need a way in away from cams, and maybe a distraction so the guards will leave?"

"That's going to be an issue," Karl said. "I can't see you on cams anymore."

"What?" Skeppy asked.

"I can't see you guys on cams anymore," Karl repeated.

"Did you just lose us? I haven't moved," Sapnap said.

"No, I didn't lose you, I think-" Karl grunted as he looked more intensely at the cams. "I've lost access to the cams on the floor. They're just looping old footage."

"Okay, what does that mean?" Dream managed to sneak in one last question before Quackity and Marigold got too close.

"Karl, try security hallway cams, maybe they're not tampered with," Skeppy said.

"They're not, but the signal jammer or whatever this is- it's messing up all the frequency," Karl said. "I've lost eyes, I can't help Bad get to security and get the passcode."

"Fuck," Sapnap said.

"You're on your own Bad," Karl said.

"Shall I bring you to the elevator sir?" Marigold asked as she walked up to Dream.

Dream finally met Quackity's eyes, who throughout this entire conversation needed to keep quiet despite having so much to say about their plan falling into pieces around them. Quackity eyes widened, indicating a little bit of panic.

"I think we can find our way," Dream answered politely, still as mysterious as ever. "Thank you."

"I can't find her?" Wilbur spun around in confusion. "Anyone see her?"

"I don't know what she looks like," Tubbo said.

"I am in the bathroom," Tommy replied.

"What the f-" Jack yelled.

"I am hiding," Ranboo whispered, completely ignoring the conversation that's happening.

"How do you lose an entire woman?" George asked incredulously.

"You forget to cherish her," Eret said.

"No don't, don't-" Fundy snorted.

"Fundy, can you tell me where she is?" Wilbur requested.

"Can't," Fundy said. "Jamming the broadcast goes both ways. I have no cams."

"Right," Eret muttered, also spinning around in his spot though it looked much more graceful than Wilbur, and his eyes were still hidden under his iconic pair of shades. "Found her, she's walking past the Big Six Wheel tables, go Wilb, go."

Wilbur nodded slightly, the gesture so subtle you can barely pick up if you weren't paying attention, the most charming smile on his face as he sauntered up to the floor manager.

"Hello there darlin'," See Wilbur knew if anything, his accent was going to help his cause. Play to your strengths I guess. "I need a little favor."

"Of course sir," Marigold gleamed. "We strive to accommodate, what can we help you with?"

"Wonderful," Wilbur said. "See I've got a friend, super private, he needs the best treatment, and I mean the best, most hospitable service you have." He smiled. "You could manage that, couldn't you?"

"Of course sir, what do you need?" Marigold nodded.

"Your private elevator, if you could," Wilbur replied, pulling out the black card Eret had given him.

Marigold's eyes glanced down at the card, eyes lighting up in understanding before giggling. Wilbur wasn't really expecting that kind of reaction, his eyebrows furrowing in a bit of confusion.

"You're with that other guy!" Marigold giggled, holding out the nearly identical black card, Quackity had given her once Dream and Quackity left.

It was Wilbur's turn to get wide-eyed in surprise, jaw slightly dropping before quickly recovering.

"They've already got the key," Marigold informed him. "Unfortunately I could only give two out, so you may need to contact your associates to let you in."

"Uh-" Wilbur stuttered, completely off guard.

"Is there anything else I could do for you, sir?" Marigold said, peaking down at her phone that's continuously buzzing. "If not sir, there is an emergency that I have to attend to. My colleague-" Marigold waved down a junior floor manager. "-can show you the way, or help contact your associates if you need."

"No, no, I've got it-" Wilbur said. "I'll contact them myself."

"Please let me know if you need anything else sir, have an enjoyable stay," Marigold said before bowing out.

"Wilbur, that was complete shit," Jack said. "You caved. What kind of acting is that? We don't have the key."

"Did you see that?" Wilbur asked, turning to look Eret in the face. "Eret, did you see that?"

"You were too far, I couldn't see anything," They replied. "What is it?"

"She has a Herobrine card," Wilbur said. "Or what looked like- we couldn't, we can't-"

"Oh no we cannot do this right now," Eret groaned. "I'll get the passcode first, we can figure out the elevator passage later."

"Right, right," Wilbur nodded. "Jack, you wanna go with Eret?"

"Already ahead of you," Jack said.

Wilbur watched as Eret and Jack disappeared into a service hallway, making their way towards the security room.

"Right everybody, stand by," Wilbur said as he moved away from the very exposed, very crowded center of the floor.

Jack and Eret were walking down the hallway, Eret gesturing towards Jack to hang back as they barged their way into the security room.

"You absolute useless buffoons," Eret exclaimed. "What is your purpose if you couldn't stop a bunch of pick pockets from crawling all over your establishment?"

The four guards sitting in front of the wall of monitors that to Eret's understanding, were simply looping a broadcast from a few weeks ago. The guards turned in utter confusion, looking at Eret

and each other trying to figure out how they even got to the security room.

"Sir-" One of them stood up to approach Eret. Eret just looked at him, eyebrows raising in a challenge, and the guard immediately stopped himself. "Ma'am?"

Eret simply rolled their eyes and sighed, though honestly, as mean as it may be, trying to fluster the security guards to create a distraction is a superpower that they will very much abuse.

"Sir is fine," Eret replied. "A ruby necklace. Somebody stole a ruby necklace off my neck- off my neck!" He exclaimed outrageously. "I'll have your entire security team for this, that necklace is worth 950 thousand dollars-"

The mention of that alone was enough to make all four guards choke on air, panic rising immediately.

"Oh-" A second one stood up almost immediately. "Uhm- we-"

"Get on the floor and help me," Eret urged. "If he leaves, the necklace is gone. Gone!"

"Y-yes sir," Two of them walked out and immediately started shouting commands into their comms.

"And you two," Eret said darkly. "Couldn't even see anything in your security cameras? Useless, absolutely useless-"

Eret sauntered in and leaned forward to inspect the computer. Her hand was sneakily crawling across the remaining two guards, finding a bit of exposed skin to which she placed two nearly invisible skin-colored sedative-infused patches.

She did say patches would be a good idea.

"Shame," Eret muttered as the two guards slowly lost focus in their gaze, heads slowly lulling. "Three, two-"

Their heads thudded on the table, both instantly passed out where they sat. Jack entered the security room seconds after and immediately started to type on one of the computers.

Eret did not forget to peel off the evidence, careful not to touch the reactive side of the patch on his

own skin.

"Hallway 14 was it Fundy?" Jack asked as he continued to type.

"If the blueprints don't lie," Fundy said.

"Which vault?" Jack asked as he continued to place command lines after command lines. "Wait Fundy, what's the code for-"

"Retrieve_Access," Fundy answered. "And it doesn't matter what vault, we need the keycard."

"Another key?" George asked. "You didn't tell us that we needed another key on top of the elevator access key."

"Well I didn't know George," Fundy said. "I thought I could override it because of electronics, but it's got a special magnet-"

"How difficult is that?" Eret asked, still keeping an eye out for the guards coming backs

"Not as difficult as the fingerprint access to the vault," Fundy said.

"You're kidding," Ranboo sighed.

"No," Fundy sighed. "Fingerprint and card, or alternatively, retina scan."

"Dude," Tubbo exclaimed.

"I'm back, what's up?" Tommy said.

"Whatever, whatever, I got the hallway codes, we gotta leave, we gotta leave," Jack nudged Eret before both of them slipped out of the hallway and back into the casino floor.

"That's one down, a whole other shit to go," Wilbur sighed.

"Bad, where are you at right now?" Dream asked as he and Quackity made their way down to the basement floor where the vault is held.

"I'm walking down this hallway," Bad said. "Finding blindspots manually is a lot harder you know, I need practice."

"They haven't seen you at all yes?" Skeppy asked.

"I'm safe Skeppy," Bad said. "There's just so many people in the hallway."

"I don't understand, two guards left the hallway a few minutes earlier Bad," Sapnap said. "You should be clear."

"I hear voices, I can't go in, not without a proper distraction," Bad said.

"We need some kind of access Bad, we're just standing out of this door like a bunch of buffoons," Quackity said.

"Oh we're out of time, we're out of time," Skeppy said. "The guards are coming back."

"Wait I think I might be able to-" Bad said as he snuck towards the security room only. "Oh crud," His jaw dropped at the sight of it.

"Bad they're coming back, you can't get caught-" Dream insisted.

"I'm- I'm-" Bad stuttered.

"Bad get out!" Sapnap yelled.

"I'm out, I'm out!" Bad exclaimed as he slipped out through the back side of the hallway, somehow finding himself in the restaurant kitchen.

"Did you almost get caught?" Karl asked.

"No, no-" Bad shook his head, more confused than ever. "That wasn't why. The guards in the security room were out cold. Passed out on their desk. They're going to-"

"Oh fuck," Karl sighed. "They raised alarms."

"Exactly," Bad mumbled.

"What alarm?" Quackity asked. "The Casino sounds fine."

"They're not going to risk cleaning out the entire casino, but an alert popped up on my screen, they've alerted their entire staff," Karl said.

"I'm so confused, what the fuck is happening?" Skeppy muttered. "Dream?"

"I'll figure it out," Dream shook his head. "Q and I will try to find another access, I think we can go round a different hall or through some service door- We just need the vault card."

"Got it," Sapnap cracked his neck then his knuckles. "Just so I don't take the wrong person, remind me again the target."

"Craps table 3," Skeppy said. "Jefferson Bowman. Looks like daddy's money, smells like it too. He has a box at the casino vault so he has his own card."

"Daddy's money-" Sapnap scoffed. "I see that."

Sapnap watched from the corner of his eyes the snobbishly dressed fuck boy, for a lack of a better word, surrounded by about 3-4 girls trying to please him. Odds are they were probably paid for it and Sapnap knows exactly what to do.

Running his hand through his hair, just as Quackity did, Sapnap walked up to the table with a smirk and oozing with confidence. He knew he looked good, Karl told him.

He clocked the girl closest to the Bowman, sliding himself into the table.

"Ooh, how's it looking here?" Sapnap interjected, feeling the instantaneous annoyed look coming from Bowman. "You lucky?" He asked the girl.

"Take a hike dude," Bowman said.

"Oh, I'm sorry," Sapnap said. "You're with someone." Sapnap made it a point to place the attention on the girl.

"Yeah, she is," Bowman answered.

"I was talking to her," Sapnap interjected. "Not you buddy."

"Well she's with me," Bowman said sternly.

"Oh that's unfortunate," Sapnap grimaced. "Darling, you deserve better than a trust fund baby- what's your name sweetheart?"

Sapnap was charming. That much was undeniable. Karl should be jealous, but truth be told he was grinning behind the camera, turning red at the sound of Sapnap's flirtatious voice.

"Buddy-" Bowman began.

"Celine," The girl answered, smiling at Sapnap.

"Well Celine," Sapnap continued to ignore his target. "Blow for me?" Sapnap held out his two dices in front of her face. The girl leaned forward and blew, Sapnap's eyes flickering to watch Bowman's

rage-filled face.

Sapnap threw the dice, and listen- He didn't think he was gonna win, to be honest, he doesn't even know how craps actually work, but the table was cheering for him. God was he lucky for that.

"We're leaving," Bowman stated, hands grabbing Celine's wrist.

"Oh, come on *buddy*-" Sapnap said condescendingly. "Can't share the spotlight?"

"You're not even worth my time," Bowman replied.

"Mad that your girl likes me more?" Sapnap challenged.

"You don't who you're dealing with," Bowman said.

"Ooh, I'm scared-" Sapnap sang. "You wanna fight me there champ?"

Sapnap was a particularly good agitator. Could be because he's just a good fighter, could be because he was feeling confident with the gun strapped to his leg.

"I will fucking end you-" Bowman threatened. "I can make you disappear-"

"With daddy's money?" Sapnap interjected. "Go on, throw the first punch, it'll make you feel better."

"We're leaving," Bowman said darkly to Celine who rolled her eyes but was resigned to follow him away.

"Hey Celine darling," Sapnap called out before they got too far. "When Mr. Two-pumps-two-inches there falls asleep and you don't wanna be disappointed-" Sapnap winked. "You know where to find me."

You wanna hurt a fragile man's ego? You hit it where it hurts.

It didn't happen in a flash and it wasn't a surprise. Sapnap could've avoided it, could've stopped it. But it was all carefully planned out don't you know. Sapnap even turned his head a little bit to the right knowing that a fist was flying straight to his face.

It landed, though turning his face absolutely helped with the momentum on the punch. He heard people gasping and calling for security. Bowman was immediately restrained by two men, surrounded by security as he trashed.

"Don't fucking touch me," Bowman hissed as he tried to shrug off the hands holding him and guiding him out.

"Are you okay?" Sapnap felt Celine's hand on his shoulder.

Sapnap looked up, hand touching his bruised cheek, a triumphant smile on his face.

"I'll be alright Celine, you have a good night," Sapnap greeted. "I have somewhere to be."

Needless to say, Celine was surprised and very disappointed when Sapnap proceeded to walk away. He watched as Bowman was wrestled out by security, or someone who he thought was security was in fact, Bad and Skeppy.

Bowman stormed off in anger, leaving on his own accord to save whatever pride he has left. Sapnap watched as Bad held the key card between his fingers, Skeppy winking at Sapnap for a job well done.

"Got the card," Sapnap said. "What's next?"

"You should've gotten the person," Karl said. "We need fingerprints."

"I was busy getting punched," Sapnap said.

"You're right, I'm sorry, how's your pretty face? Are you okay?" Karl asked.

"I'm alright, I'm strong, I'm cool-"

"We are on a schedule," Dream warned.

"Sorry," Sapnap piped up, looking at Skeppy and Bad laughing at him.

"Hey if we need to chop off someone's fingers-" Quackity said. "Guess who showed up 10 minutes ago?"

"Who?" Skeppy asked. "Wait, aren't you down in the basement with Dream?"

"No, I was trying to find another passageway but I couldn't find any, I'll be down in a bit-" Quackity informed him. "But uh- Marakova just showed up. She's heading up the elevator."

"Oh fuck-"

"Fundy," Ranboo said.

"What?" Fundy called back.

"You said he was on the tables with the die right?" Ranboo said.

"Yes, he's this rich boy type, and info says he has the keycard for the vault," Fundy said. "You just need to lift it from his pocket."

"Right," Ranboo said. "First of all, I'm not good at lifting, second-"

"God, what is it Ranboo?" Tommy said impatiently.

"He just got escorted out," Ranboo said. "The keycard- the whole person is gone, security brought

him out."

"Why'd they do that?" Tubbo asked.

"He got into a fight and punched someone," Ranboo said, turning to walk away from the crowd only to run immediately into someone.

He felt a pair of hands hold his arms and he looked forward (not up, because this boy is very very tall) and was face to face with a security guard.

"Sorry," Ranboo mumbled. The guard looked at him, eyebrows furrowing as he examined his face.

"How old are you kid? You look a little young to be here," The guard asked him.

"Ranboo, get out of there-" Wilbur said.

"Wait wait I have an idea!" Tubbo yelled. "Ranboo distract him-"

"Tubbo, if Ranboo gets caught-" Eret said.

"I think I'm alright," Ranboo answered out loud, both to answer to the guard and to his team. "I'm here so I should be of age."

"Tommy come!" Tubbo exclaimed.

"How old are you?" The guard asked again.

"I think it's a bit rude to ask a person their age, didn't they tell you that? It's like the first rule of life, never ask a woman-" Ranboo rambled.

"Show me your ID," The guard demanded.

Ranboo tried his best to stall, but Tommy and Tubbo's heads popping up only to duck back down

as they crawled on the floor. Tubbo gestured towards the craps table from behind the guard's back, and Ranboo knew immediately what to do.

"My ID?" Ranboo said, walking slowly as to lead the guard away.

He waited until Tubbo and Tommy snuck really close behind the guard before turning, causing all of them to move in a clockwise direction so Tubbo and Tommy steered clear of his attention.

"Yes, your ID," He said. "You can't be here."

"I can't be here?" Ranboo asked. "That's a shame. Are you sure?"

"Not without an ID," The guard said.

Ranboo watched as Tommy and Tubbo snuck their way into the craps table, confusion and a little loud, people confused about the two children looking a little out of place.

"Well I don't have an ID," Ranboo answered honestly, making sure the guard's attention was on him as Tommy and Tubbo started to collect all the empty glasses of drinks from the table that their target was at.

"What the fuck?" Jack muttered.

"You got a better idea?" Tommy hissed as he cleared the table from whiskey and cocktail glasses. "Sorry big man, can I have that?" He said before grabbing the glass out of someone's hand.

"You don't have an ID?" The guard asked, but Ranboo was a little preoccupied, looking across the guard's shoulder to look at the absolute chaos happening in the craps table.

"No!" Ranboo yelled when the guard attempted to turn and look at the commotion.

"Tommy that was in someone's hand, clearly it's not Bowman's-" Wilbur was bewildered.

"Well, you got a better idea, Wilbur? Better safe than sorry!" Tubbo said aggressively.

"Kid, who are you talking to?" The craps dealer asked.

"Voices in my head, don't mind me-" Tubbo said, placing the drinks on the tray he'd stolen.

"How do you not have an ID?" The guard looked sternly at Ranboo. "And what are you looking at?"

"I'm-" Ranboo said loudly. "Homeless."

Fundy and Eret snorted, and George chuckled. Tubbo did a slow head turn and looked at Ranboo incredulously, but Ranboo only glared at him so he would move a little faster.

The guard stood there gaping at Ranboo, while Ranboo nervously counted down the time until Tommy and Tubbo successfully ran away from the table carrying the glasses.

"Okay," Ranboo grinned. "Bye!"

Ranboo sprinted away, and at this point he couldn't even hide in the casino anymore, resorting to run to the van and chill with Fundy instead.

"You're homeless?" Fundy cackled as Ranboo opened the door and climes inside.

"Shut up Fundy," Ranboo sneered. "You think you can lift a viable fingerprint off the glass Tubbo?"

"Maybe," Tubbo said softly. "I have tape, I have a pencil, I'm going to crush the lead- we're doing this the scuffed way."

"I'm sorting through the glass, I think it's this one," Tommy sounded confused on top of the clinking of glasses.

"Oh shit-" George's voice mumbled.

"Fuck, I keep forgetting you're around George-" Eret cursed. "What is it?"

"You might not even have time to figure out the prints or break-in," George said. "They're coming down right now."

"Who's- They?" Wilbur gasped. "They're an hour early, they just met- they should be going through the deal right now!"

"I think they might want proof the payment is in the vault," George said. "Either way, they're coming. We're a bit fucked. I'm coming down to the casino."

"I-" Karl inhaled a sharp breath, unsure of how to react to what he's seeing.

"What is it, Karl?" Sapnap, as always, is the one to notice should anything happen to Karl.

"I think-" Karl said. "I think I just saw the kid who shot you walk through the parking lot."

"What?" Sapnap asked.

"I can't be sure because I got shot too, that time, but he-" Karl sputtered. "Just got into a black van."

"You mean the kids who broke out Eret?" Dream asked. "They're here?" He exclaimed.

"Oh, oh-" Skeppy gasped. "Dream that explains- so, so much. That- oh shit-"

A thud and a crash.

"Skeppy?" Bad called. "You okay? Where are you?" There was a beat of silence. "Skeppy?"

"I took the elevator-" Skeppy said. "To keep an eye out for Marakova and the manufacturers to gauge for time since our cameras failed."

"Don't tell me-" Dream mumbled.

"They're coming back down right now," Skeppy said. "We don't have time."

"I can-" Karl said, though he strained a little bit, unsure if he should even continue his sentence.

"Come in clutch Karl, what can you do?" Quackity said.

"Tell me which elevator and I can shut it down. I can trap them for a bit," Karl said. "But if they raise major alarms, security might increase near the vaults so we might be screwed either way."

"Do it, do it," Dream said.

"Which elevator?" Karl asked.

"Middle elevator," Skeppy said.

"That would be elevator 2," Bad clarified. "East wing, North facing."

"Bad, Skeppy, we have to join Dream and Quackity in the basement," Sapnap said. "I'm heading towards the private elevator."

"On my way, on my way," Skeppy assure him. "I'm on my way down already to the first floor."

"I did it-" Karl said.

"Yep-" Skeppy said. "I hear the elevator stop next to mine."

"Quackity, none of us have access to the elevator key, one of you needs to come get us," Bad said.

"Q's busy with bypassing the passcode, it's a bit difficult," Dream said. "I'm coming up to get you guys."

"Got the fingerprint! I think-" Tubbo winced. "Do we have time? Do we have time?"

"They're trapped in the elevator," Fundy said suddenly.

"Fundy, say that again?" Jack asked.

"The elevator stopped, I think Marakova and the buyers are in the elevator. The middle elevator," Fundy exclaimed.

"Ah yes, the gods have blessed us," Ranboo said. "We don't even have the access down to the basement though."

"Where is everyone?" George asked. "I'm in the casino."

George wasn't as tall as everyone. He looked around, spinning as he tried to locate his team, who are particularly good at being invisible. Eyes scanning the walls, the doors, and hallways behind them.

"Me and Wilbur are still trying to figure out how to get down as Ranboo kindly reminded us," Eret said.

"You're welcome," Ranboo piped up.

"Without the private elevator-" Wilbur said.

George's eyes caught something. A person. Certain people to be exact, three of them. George could not even begin to explain the thoughts going through his brain. He'll admit, he's been a bit out of it this entire mission, only hearing the trouble his team faced through one-sided comm interactions.

But this- this makes so much sense.

~~*Fuck you, Technoblade.*~~

"Go to the private elevator," George said.

"Gogy we are *so far*," Tommy said.

"Run then," George said. "Go to the hall that takes you to the private elevator now, all of you."

"George?" Jack called.

"Now!" George commanded as he ran towards the hallway where the three people disappeared too.

George stood in front of the door, catching his breath for a bit, looking around to finally see Eret and Wilbur, Tommy and Tubbo, and also Jack, within the distance, slowly converging to where he was standing.

Before they finally got to him though, he entered through the door. He had to be first, he has to.

The hallway was pretty bare, the private elevator being the only thing at the end of it. There were four now, four people in the elevator talking to each other, and they were pretty distracted to not notice George standing in the hallway. George took this time to examine their faces. Almost familiar.

The door of the elevator was closing when the door behind George opened yet again, this time bringing in his entire team of 5.

"What-" Eret's words were immediately stopped by Wilbur placing a hand over her mouth.

That noise was apparently enough to capture their attention, the people in the elevator finally looking up to see the crowd that has confronted them. A hand stretched out and crashed into the elevator door, forcing it to open again.

"You," George was somewhere between an amused scoff and exasperated disbelief.

Dream stood there, stunned beyond belief as looked upon George's face. Dream's eyes, however, quickly flickered around to see the people George had brought with him. Eret, Wilbur, with two three fucking kids? And he could tell his team was just about as confused as he was.

But still. At 32 days since the confrontation at Billington tower- 32 days after they worked together to take down Johansen, he's finally faced to face with his soulmate. Eyes locking, staring deep into each other, an involuntary smile curved on his face.

"You."

Chapter End Notes

PS. CHECK OUT THIS [REALLY COOL FANART](#) BY [BASIL](#) AND FOLLOW THEM

dnf crumbs? karlnap flirting?? all the boys??

again, hopefully that wasn't too complicated with the skipping scenes and back and forth but uh, but yeah. next update is the confrontation/conversation :D so wait for that

i'll try to keep with the sunday updates but i might need to make them shorter because i'm focusing on karlnap week

kudos and comments are super super appreciated!! i love it so much

sub to the fic or sub to user if you want notifications!!

and also feel free to follow me on twt: @noimnotJJ

i mostly live tweet random things and simp over steamers + interact with a bunch of other writers which you should also probably check out

that is all, catch you guys next time!!

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

IM TWO DAYS LATE I AM SORRY and ITs NOT EVEN A LONG ChApTer

been focusing more of my half ass energy into karlnap week.

anyway I hope you guys enjoy this !!!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Fuck," Wilbur was the first outburst.

"You," Dream repeated, this time much darker as he looked over George's shoulder, eyes glaring instead at Wilbur and Eret. "Yo-

"Enemy of my enemy," Eret said hurriedly. "They're coming."

"We stopped their elevator," Sapnap responded immediately.

"Well it's not gonna last long big guy-" Jack scoffed, and Sapnap stared at him with the utmost confusion.

"Dream?" Bad called.

Dream looked very distasteful towards the group of criminals, but his eyes fell onto George, who very slowly and carefully took a step forward, and Dream couldn't protest.

"Fine," Dream growled.

Dream was upset, he really was, but watching George's lips slowly curve into a smirk as the group jogged towards the elevator made the butterflies go crazy.

The thing was though, the elevator was not exactly made for 10 people. I mean, in theory, it was made for 10 people, it could actually fit up to 12. But the designers of the elevators didn't really

take into account the awkwardness and the tension that being in 2 rival groups brings.

Also, nearly half of the people in the elevator are above 6 feet tall creates some weird dynamics of Dream being at eye level with Wilbur, Eret, and the child.

They were all kind shoved in there and wouldn't you know it, George was pushed up against the one and only. He was stumbling forwards after being pushed in by Tommy and Tubbo, and Dream quickly caught him by the arms, eyes meeting each other before both blushing and George straightened himself up.

"Hi," Dream's voice was small, but the awkward silence in the elevator meant that everyone could hear it.

"Hi," George was breathy. He was going to have a field day going off on Techno, but for now, looking at Dream was something good.

"So you're Gogy's boyfriend?" Tommy asked out loud. Wilbur and Eret snorted.

"Oh wait, are you?" Tubbo asked as well, the two of them turned to Dream who blushed a deeper red.

"No!" George turned around and swatted at Tommy and Tubbo. "What are you-"

"What are you doing with kids anyway?" Dream looked accusingly at Wilbur and Eret.

"I'm not a kid you bastard, I am seventeen-"

"Seventeen? You're actually a child, Wilbur-" Dream growled.

"Listen, I have guardian consent. I don't know what the problem is," Wilbur shrugged.

"You're heisting a casino. You're bringing children to heist a casino-" Dream exclaimed, though his hand was still holding onto George. George could only duck his head in embarrassment.

"*You're* heisting a casino!" Eret yelled defensively. "Excuse you-"

"Oh, your kids shot me and I had to stay in the hospital overnight you fu-" Dream spoke but stopped when he felt George's hands on top of his.

"Stop," George said. Even though his eyes were looking at Dream, his tone more so indicated that he was talking to Eret and Wilbur. This was proven correct when the two went quiet. George patted Dream's hand as the elevator came to a stop.

"What in the fuck is this?" Quackity's voice ran out as the elevator door open.

"Q!" Wilbur exclaimed cheerfully.

"Oh, you fucker-" Quackity replied, shaking his head.

So those two have history apparently. Good to know.

"Out, out, out," Sapnap hissed as he started pushing people out of the elevator.

"Okay, what's happening?" Bad asked. "Were you guys the ones who knocked out the guys in the security room?"

"And the cameras!" Skeppy exclaimed.

"And you got the elevator and the key card," Jack said.

"Wait so you have the passcode," Quackity perked up and Jack grinned.

"Of course I do," Jack smirked. "Step aside."

Quackity rolled his eyes and took a step back as Jack knelt down in front of the panel. Any moment in between any significant event was just filled with uncomfortable silence and tension.

"They're coming," Eret was jittery on their foot.

"We stopped the elevator, you're welcome," Sapnap said proudly.

"Fundy?" Eret called through her earpiece.

"They're right, but not for long," Fundy said.

"Not for long," Wilbur repeated. "Jack speed up."

"I'm trying, you cock," Jack sneered, steadying the small decoded closer to the panel. "Three seconds."

"You're doing it wrong," Bad commented.

"Oh, I'm doing it wrong?" Jack sounded very offended like Bad just slandered his mother. "I'm doing it wrong, am I?"

"Yes," Bad answered flatly as he reached his hand over and started pushing buttons that Jack had failed to press.

"Hey don't-" The machine beeped and the door opened. "Well okay, in my defense-" Jack began.

"You knew what you were doing?" Bad said condescendingly.

"Piss off," Jack grumbled.

It was now 11 people walking down into the hallway that leads to the vault door.

"Oh fuck," Fundy said. You could visibly see half of the room freeze.

"What is it Fundy?" Eret asked yet again.

"Elevator is moving again," Ranboo was the one who spoke up over Fundy's aggressive typing.

"You have incoming," At just about the same time, Karl spoke up to his team. Tension ran high as they exchanged glances, collectively attempting to figure out their next move.

"Tubbo, you get us in, we'll watch the door," Wilbur said. "George you know what to get."

"Skeppy, Bad, cover?" Dream said.

Half of the group split up and headed back towards the elevator to prepare for the incoming entourage that's probably going to make their lives very difficult.

"Which one of you has the keycard?" Tubbo asked. Sapnap reached into his pocket and pulled it out only to have Tommy nicked it out of his hand, leaving Sapnap spluttering in surprise. "Big man, give it-"

"Here you go Tubs," Tommy said kindly.

Sapnap looked at Dream, eyes bulging with irritation and anger, remembering for a second there that Tubbo and Tommy, were some of the kids that had ambushed them-

Embarrassed them to no end by breaking out Herobrine's most wanted criminal who is currently in the same room as them, but turns out they really can't do anything because truce?

"How'd you get the fingerprints?" Sapnap blurted out.

"Because I'm smart," Tubbo snapped back. "Problem?" Tommy cackled loudly at the response.

"Honestly, who's kid is this?" Quackity exclaimed and Wilbur just smiled proudly.

"Everybody shush, don't disturb Tubbo," Tommy said. "Let him concentrate."

"There is also the issue with the exit," Eret spoke loudly. "There is only one."

"We fight our way out then," Dream replied. "You're no stranger to that, Eret."

"Thought you'd never say that," Eret smirked. "What are you even here for?"

"What are *you* here for?" Dream shot back.

"We want money," Jack said. "There are diamonds in there."

"Okay, we can't-" Bad piped up. "We can't help them."

"Yes you can," Wilbur said. "It's not like we're stealing from poor people, we're taking Brouilliard's diamonds."

"Hold on," Skeppy said. "Who's Brouillard?"

"Brouillard. The one buying guns from Marakova," George said. "Techno's guns. What are you here for?"

"Techno's guns," Dream replied.

George blinked at Dream.

"Got it!" Tubbo yelled as the vault door creaked open.

"Karl," Skeppy called. "Karl do you think you can hold the elevator down in the basement."

Centralize the fight to when we exit the ground floor."

"Way ahead of you," Karl replied. "You have four minutes."

"Four minutes!" Quackity called out.

"We need more than four minutes to break the safe," Dream said.

"Not if you have the proper persuasion tools," George said slyly. "How much do you care about anonymity?"

"A lot," Dream asked.

"Too bad, you have a mask anyway," George smirked. "Tommy light it up."

Tommy was already in the vault with what looks like a very aggressive-looking gun. By the looks of the weapon alone, Dream knows it was yet another one of Techno's toys. Tommy went around and shot a bunch of boxes, blasting through the metal and all the protection.

Piercing sirens started to blare across the building. Dream flinched, bringing his hands up to cover his ears.

"You're just gonna wreck shit?" Dream asked.

"Got a problem with that?" George replied.

"Yes! We're the good guys, we can't just-"

"Ah, *you* think you're the good guys," George laughed. "And *we* most certainly, are not."

Good to know George is still a little shit.

"Box 772 open, box 179 open, box 362 open," Tommy listed out as Tubbo and Jack ran in and started emptying the insides. "You. Green boy. What's your case?"

"Green-" Dream spluttered but George just pointed to his tie. "420."

"Funny number!" Tubbo and Tommy exclaimed at the same time before Tommy let out an extra shot, exploding the case door into pieces.

Tommy swiped away the smoke and debris from his face before looking into the case only to find a flash drive. Tommy didn't give it a second thought, taking it in his hand before tossing it to Dream.

"Wilbur," Tubbo called. "Can we shoot another one?"

"No Tubbo, three cases," Wilbur answered patiently.

"Oh come on, I've got a feeling box 696 has something good in it," Tubbo said and Tommy gasped.

"Oooh, Wilbur," Tommy exclaimed. "Can we, can we, can we?"

"We've got less than two minutes to back up to the first floor and make our escape," Eret said.
"Wilbur said no."

"Awh," Tommy pouted.

Dream stood there, honestly a little lost at the position he's found himself. He watched, Techno's flash-drive in hand, as Tubbo and Jack ran out with handfuls of diamonds, Tommy still carrying the gun.

"You wanna get caught or what, idiot?" George's voice brought him back to reality.

Dream hadn't even realized that George's team had bolted towards the elevator, a few of his teammates already inside as well. Dream jogged and made it just in time before the door closed.

The elevator was more cramped with the addition of Quackity now. Still, people made space to retrieve their weapons, knowing what was waiting for them on the first floor.

Dream's team all had regulation guns that they'd kept under their coats, flat against their back. Their concern was more so to what weapons George's team was going to pull out.

Dream watched, heart beating irregularly as if more confused with itself than anything, and George pulled down his goggles. He also heard Eret cock a gun, and Wilbur adjusting an even bigger rifle.

"You two are heading straight to the door," Wilbur said, glancing at Tommy and Tubbo. "No ifs, ands, or buts. Understood?"

"Awh Wil-" Tommy complained again.

"*Understood?*" Wilbur repeated more sternly. "Ranboo, you're making sure they meet you out there."

"Uh-" Ranboo hesitated. "I would if I was outside."

"Ranboo," Eret said. "You *were* outside."

"That's true," Ranboo said as the elevator door opened back up. "I came back in to pull the fire alarm."

An even louder blaring siren echoed through the casino as people started to scatter. Eret and Wilbur, through all the crime they did and possibly attempted murder they've done, knows a whole lot about how to work with kids, and their personal moral code.

Ranboo was not about to let innocent bystanders be in the surrounding area when guns started blazing.

"Did you do this?" Quackity asked.

"Unfortunately," Eret answered. "Fundy, we need the most effective escape route."

"Give me a moment," Fundy said.

"Karl, you have eyes on local police?" Skeppy asked.

"Something like that," Karl said.

Both Dream and Wilbur both spotted the incoming flood of henchmen stalking towards them with guns and batons. They waited, seconds as the people filtered out, and they were met with screaming when some of them saw the weapons.

"Agent 27916," Marakova said. "How wonderful to see you."

"Do you just have a group text?" Dream said. "Does everyone just know my number?"

"27916," Dream heard George mumble next to him.

"Mr. Soot and the Prodigal Son," Brouillard greeted. "Fancy seeing you here. Together," The blonde man glanced at the Herobrine team. "With them."

"Are you working together?" Marakova asked. "No, surely not. I'm pretty that one works for us." She pointed a long slim finger at George.

"Yeah," George nodded. "Things change."

"We will make this simple," Brouillard said threateningly. "Give back whatever you took and perhaps, we make your end very quick."

"Yeah, that's happening," Eret replied.

"Have it your way," Marakova shrugged. "The kids can go first," She raised the handgun and pointed it at Tubbo.

George barely registered what had happened, Wilbur's shouts being the only thing in his ears when he saw a blur of motion surge forward from his side. Dream had caught her hand and shoved the gun to point to the sky, kicking her down by the back of her knee.

"You two," Dream stared down at Tommy and Tubbo. "Go!"

If Wilbur was stern as Wilbur is, Dream was downright terrifying. Especially coming from someone they didn't know. Tommy and Tubbo ducked over the gunfire and headed away from the center of the fight. From over the slot machines, George saw Ranboo, waiting for Tommy and Tubbo before the three of them could get out of there.

"They have the diamonds," Brouillard managed to speak even though he was under Sapnap's chokehold. "Get-"

"Dude, shut-" Sapnap pulled even harder. "-up!"

But it was too late. Bad and Skeppy immediately went running after about six men, both from Marakova and Brouilliard's staff, who'd left to chase after the trio.

"Fundy!" Eret yelled.

"Police are coming!" Fundy screamed back. "I'm trying to get rid of them."

Eret looked up, very frustratingly at the chaos that has happened. Setting off three shots that cleared his vision, she made a point to watch where her kids were going.

The three minors have a dynamic that is unmatched, and a sense of communication that needs no words.

"Ranboo," Tubbo was quick to throw his bag of diamonds at Ranboo before jumping over the roulette table, taking a bunch of chips, and throwing it behind him.

"Tommy!" Ranboo took a swift turn, throwing the bag over all of the henchmen, directly at Tommy who'd got himself on top of the slot machines.

Ranboo immediately took out a gun, non-lethal of course, Techno would not allow that but Techno would never leave Ranboo without a weapon, and shot two men in the back as they turned to look at Tommy. The two men fell face first. Ranboo quickly ducked and made his way towards where

Tommy was.

"Tubs," Tommy jumped off the slot machines, having left the diamonds on top of the slots but not to the eyes of the people chasing him. He was still the target, but that was okay by him if Tubbo could get the diamonds and run.

Bad and Skeppy finally caught up, taking the men down one by one in time for Tubbo to hide the diamonds back with Ranboo, allowing Tommy to escape.

"Our man can't get here, he's dealing with the police," Eret told Dream as the two of them ducked behind the bar to avoid the spray of bullets. "Get the kids out, please."

He didn't have time to figure out the technicalities of what he was doing or the implication. Somehow seeing Eret, and even more so Wilbur who he's crossed paths with once or twice, caring about the kids (despite being irresponsible enough to bring them in missions in the first place) showed that they weren't entirely monsters.

Eret was asking, begging for help even. So Dream obliged without a second of hesitation.

"Karl, forget the police, I need you to pick up the kids through the back kitchen exit," Dream said.

"T-minus three minutes," Karl said.

"Three minutes," Dream repeated to Eret. "Q, Sap, need you to clear a path to the kitchen of the lounge so the kids can leave."

"Got it," Quackity obliged.

"Tubbo, Tommy, Ranboo," Eret said. "Someone is getting you. You are leaving through the lounge kitchen."

"Got it," It was very comforting to hear all the three voices reply to their command.

Eret and Dream shared a nod before both of them jumping out of their hiding spot to run back into

the fight.

George was never great at floor combat, but his shots were still accurate enough to take down the people as needed. Wilbur and Jack were back to back, each of them with a different gun, an interesting-looking gun courtesy of the crown.

Quackity whistled loudly, capturing the attention of the trio, who were still running around like a headless chicken, being chased for the diamonds they carried.

"Jack, go with them," Wilbur instructed, but Jack only shook his head with a hearty laugh.

"Not a chance," Jack replied.

Quackity held the door open for the trio to run into the lounge kitchen. He walked in after them, the door closing behind him, Sapnap immediately standing guard at the door to stop oncoming men.

Tommy practically threw the door open, stumbling up into the alley to see the Herobrine van, the door already open waiting for them.

"Get in, get in," Karl yelled as they jumped into the back.

"Tell him where to go," Quackity said, glaring into their eyes. "If you try anything funny with him, I will hurt you."

Ranboo nodded before slamming the van door closed, Karl speeding off immediately. Quackity ran back into the fight inside, popping up behind Sapnap. Dream turned to him, receiving a very adamant nod.

"Wilbur, tell your man to let the police through," Dream said. "Your kids are out. Have them pick you up, we'll take care of the rest."

Wilbur nodded, a smile on his face.

"Fundy," Wilbur said as he continued to avoid flying shots and charging people. "Let the police through and come pick us up from the kitchen back alley."

"Be there in a bit," Fundy said, his message transmitting through the remaining 4 earpieces that were left inside the building.

The people were dwindling down, especially knowing the police were coming. They were bleeding, bruised, and battered, ripped clothes, cut in various places. Dream made sure that Bad and Skeppy had restrained Marakova and Brouillard, leaving Sapnap and Quackity to fight the remaining men, before running after George and his team towards the lounge.

George was at the door when Dream caught his wrist.

Wilbur, Eret, and Jack had already jumped into their own van, Jack having shooed Fundy now into the back seat and taking over the driving portion of the escape.

"George," Eret called.

George looked down at Dream's hand, then back into his pleading green eyes, barely able to decipher his expression behind his mask.

"Go," George said, eyes not leaving Dream's.

"George," Wilbur repeated.

"I said go," George said sternly, head only slightly turning. "I'll meet you back on base."

There was no more room for arguments as the van side door closed and Jack started to drive away. George shifted his hand within Dream's grip, turning to hold back Dream's wrist, squeezing it ever so slightly.

"Go wrap up and come find me after," George told him. "Not a big fan of police."

"Okay," Dream's voice was small and barely audible. It was slow, and George definitely let go first, but Dream finally let go of his grip and watched as George disappeared down the alley.

Dream walked back into the main casino hall as the fight started to die off. He heard police sirens in the distance and the thumping footsteps of a fleet of officers coming down.

"You," Dream heard Marakova's voice directed at him. "You helped them escape."

"I don't know what you're talking about," Dream answered easily.

"Working with the prodigal son of Herobrine," Marakova tutted. "What oh what will the people think?"

Dream scoffed before kneeling down to Marakova, who was in handcuffs on the floor. Local authorities had started to take everyone away, though they seem to have left Marakova to Dream.

"I don't know-" Dream repeated lowly. "-what you're talking about."

"You think I can't see that?" Marakova said. "You just committed a crime- multiple crimes."

"Who do you think they're going to believe?" Dream whispered. "You? Or me."

"You don't know what you're fighting against," Marakova sang softly. "My my, Herobrine's top agent, falling from grace, all for what? That sniper? Our sniper?"

Dream's breathing changed, fire burning in his lungs as he stared into Marakova's eyes.

"He's not your sniper," Dream said.

"You think you're changing him," Marakova grinned. "Cute," she muttered. "Rivals as we may be with the Prodigal Son, it is always better to have more people on this side of the law."

"Say hi to Johansen for me," Dream said. "And Davenport. You know- if he cares enough about your being after you've gotten caught."

"Say what you want, think what you want, I've said what I've said," Marakova warned. "You're not ready for what's coming for you. And your internal conflict? Your uh- moral crisis? Good luck with that."

Dream stood up, looked at a few officers, and simply nudged his head towards Marakova, asking them to take her away. There was an intense gaze shared between Marakova and Dream, filled with intense rage that did not break even as she was taken away. It only stopped when Dream felt Sapnap tap his shoulder.

"We got it covered, go find him," Sapnap told him.

Dream nodded before slowly making his way back through the lounge, then the kitchen. He was careful to slip through the dozens of officers, making sure none of them saw him, to decrease the chances of being followed. He emerged to the back alley and looked around.

George did say to come find him.

Holy shit, if he has to find him again-

A little tinge of pain shot through his shoulder followed by the sound of a bullet striking the metal dumpster behind him. Dream turned towards where the shot back from, only to see George's head pop up over the rooftop of the nearby building.

His head disappeared quickly. Dream shaking his head with a little laugh before making his way into the building and up flight and flights of stairs before emerging at the rooftop.

And there he was.

George was sitting at the ledge, his gun already stored back into his bag. He looked-

Dream is not going to drool over his soulmate. He should be, or he's technically allowed to. But we're talking about the sniper that has once broken into the MET gala through the front door. Worked with Davenport, currently working with Eret. (Dream does not want to think about whether or not he had a say in helping Eret escape.)

Arch-nemesis. Bastard. Murderer. He was just caught trying to steal a bunch of diamonds from the casino for god's sake. Dream was certain that story about the sniper who shot Richie Battaglia, notorious Mob Boss, through an airport window causing the entirety of O'Hare airport to shut down, was 95% likely to be George.

Still. With the moonlight softly beaming down on his face, illuminating his cheekbones and jawline, his hair messily fluffed up, only to be pressed down by the goggles that sat atop his head. George was, undeniably, and very irritably, beautiful.

"You didn't have to shoot me," Dream said.

"I know," George shrugged. "It's fun though."

Dream kept his eyes locked onto George like he was afraid he was going to disappear right from in front of his eyes. He took one step forward before George spoke.

"Don't let the door behind you close, it locks," George said.

Dream turned and caught the door, wedging it open with a stray brick.

"Would you have just been stuck up here then?" Dream muttered. "Maybe I should've left you up here."

"Then at least you'd know how to find me," George shot back.

Dream rolled his eyes with a chuckle, walking towards George until they were face to face.

"You're bleeding," Dream brought his hand up to caress George's cheek, a red slash with a bit of dried blood on his skin. His finger made contact, ever so slightly before George flinched and tilted his head away.

"I'm fine," George said.

"Bruises on your neck, your shoulder, definitely cracked a few ribs-"

"I'm fine," George repeated. "Agent 27916, you are not a doctor."

"Clay," Dream said and George looked up. "My name is Clay. Thought it was fair."

"Right," George nodded. "You're also bleeding," George noted, though he kept his arm wrapped around himself. "I know I shot you in the shoulder but we both know that outcome." His eyes trailed Dream from the top of his hair to the bottom of his foot. "Your ankle doing alright?"

"Should've seen me limp up the 5 flights of stairs," Dream nudged his head towards the door.

"There's an elevator. It's not my fault you're stupid," George criticized.

Dream jokingly sneered at him only to have George sneer right back.

"You're a hard man to find," Dream commented.

"Call it an occupational necessity," George shrugged. He turned and started to walk away, going back to stand on the ledge.

"Still," Dream said. "Thought you'd give me a hint or two seeing as how you invited me to come find you."

"I didn't invite you," George said, as he was slowly trailing the edge of the building, placing one foot in front of the other without even looking. "It was simply a statement. You did take about 6 months attempting to find me and then failing."

"Okay, rub it in my face then," Dream said sarcastically only getting a cheekily smile from George as he spun around to walk back in the other direction. "Would you-"

George turned to look at Dream who was midway putting his down as if he had been reaching out. A mischievous smirk curved on George's face.

"Scared of heights?" George asked.

Dream exhale, his lips thinned, absolutely refusing to answer.

"No," George teased. "Really?"

"I'm not a fan," Dream said.

"Oh my god," George mumbled. "He has a weakness. What happens if I fall off the edge? Are you gonna catch me?"

"No," Dream answered instantly.

"Really," George said, slowly leaning backward, feet getting even closer to the edge. "You're going to let me fall?"

George jokingly jerked back, knowing full well he has full control of his balance on his foot, but looking like he'd just slipped. Dream surged forward, his eyes widening in panic. A smirk curved on George's face as he jumped off the ledge and dropped in front of Dream.

"I fucking hate you," Dream muttered.

"Of course you do," George said. "Hate you too."

George chuckled as Dream fume in anger. And this was when George first initiated contact. He reached his hand up, softly placing the curve of his finger underneath Dream's chin, tilting it upwards ever so slightly. He watched as Dream's eyes soften.

"Thank you," George said.

There are about a dozen of things George wanted to thank Dream for.

For not having immediately asked George to change his professions, despite having drastically different professions. For looking for him, even after knowing his past. For continuing to reach out even after figuring out that he works with Eret. For doing a bunch of semi-illegal things and bending the laws to find him.

For caring. Thank you for caring.

"For the kids," George said. "They're annoying sometimes, Tommy especially, but uhm- Thanks."

"Yeah, of course," Dream replied.

George nodded, finally dropping his hand and taking a step back.

"I'll see you around," George said.

"Wait, George," Dream call, again grabbing his wrist just as George was about to turn and walk away. "That's it?"

"Yeah," George said. "What more do you want?"

"I-" Dream spluttered. "I don't know. We're soulmates."

"I'm aware," George said. "But what are you gonna do?"

"Well, what are you doing now?" Dream asked.

"I don't know," George shrugged. "You live, I live. We're bound to cross paths, and when we do, we do."

"You live your life, I live mine?" Dream repeated and George nodded.

"It's not like we can change much," George said. "You like your job and I like mine, despite what you may think-"

"Eret's a bad person, George," Dream whispered, taking another step closer towards George.

"Well, I am too," George took the challenge and faced him, taking another step closer.

"Eret tried to kill me," Dream mumbled, leaning forward.

"So did I," George replied.

Their faces now inches from each other. Green eyes pooling into the warm brown, lips nearly brushing together. The breaths were in sync, heart beating a little faster.

"No, you didn't," Dream mumbled, the corners of his lips curved in a triumphant smile.

George's lips fell apart, eyes flicking from looking into Dream's eyes, down to his lips, before back up. Both of them restraining themselves just enough as the tension grew thicker than imaginable.

"No, I didn't," George confessed.

Bad and Sapnap must've told him anyway.

George pulled away, both their bodies relaxing though their gaze never broke.

"Did you just swipe the flash drive from my pocket?" Dream asked suddenly, noticing the black piece of plastic in George's hand. He patted down his clothes, knowing very well what the result would be.

"Yep," George grinned cheekily. "It's not like you'll need it. You already know where to find me."

"And I can't convince you, can I?" Dream asked, although he already knew the answer he was going to get. "To come with me? To stay?"

George shook his head silently.

"See I know-" George began. "I know, I'm doing bad things," He oversimplified. "But I'm afraid you don't know-"

George hesitated, watching Dream's eyebrow furrow in interest and confusion.

"You don't know what you're doing," George finished. "Or who you're doing it for."

"Right," Dream said, though surprisingly, his tone wasn't condescending. It was genuine contemplation.

"So this is where it ends," George said, slowly stepped back.

"No," Dream shook his head. "I want us to be something, George," He said earnestly. "We're going to be something. And I won't stop fighting for it."

George felt his heart pinch and his stomach turn as he continued to walk backward. He found himself nodding, grabbing his bag and throwing it on his shoulder.

"See you around, Dream," George said.

"It's Clay," Dream repeated, and George chuckled, shaking his head.

"I like Dream better," George winked.

Dream watched as George walked towards the other side of the roof. Dream was confused, but he watched as George steadied himself. George looked at Dream, a cocky smile on his face.

"I wouldn't have been trapped on the roof," George told Dream.

Before Dream could open his mouth to say anything, George had taken off on a sprint. Dream nearly yelled when George jumped over the ledge. Dream ran after him, but when he leaned over the edge, he saw that George had landed on the building next to him, one with a lower rooftop.

Dream exhaled a breath that was caught on his throat, sighing in relief when he saw George was safe, relatively speaking. George stood up and turned back to look at Dream. He raised one hand, waving him goodbye. It wasn't a salute, it wasn't a bow, it wasn't cold or cool, he was a kind wave. Very warm, and very- very George.

George turned away and continued running, jumping onto another building before Dream saw him disappeared down an emergency fire escape and into the night.

Dream left the rooftop with a rush of emotion that he's unable to decipher even if he tried. But he didn't try, there was no point in trying to figure out what he and George have.

Dream came down from the roof, eternally grateful that George had told him to wedge the door, and took the elevator down. Dream immediately got a ride back to his team's temporary base.

When he walked into the room, his team was already waiting for him. They all turned to him expectantly even though no one asked a single question.

"I got it," Dream said, taking a little plastic machine out of his pocket and tossed it to Bad. "It should have everything from his phone, and hopefully trace it all the way back to Eret."

"Got it," Bad said. "I'll start working on this." He stood up and walked towards the computer setup.

"Dream," Skeppy said. "What did Marakova say to you?"

"It wasn't Marakova," Dream stated. "But George was the one who said ended up saying what we expected."

"Which is what exactly?" Karl asked.

"Herobrine might have already been infiltrated," Dream explained. "Eret and his team may not be directly on the right side of things. They're handling it their way, but-"

"Trust no one?" Sapnap said and Dream nodded.

"Listen," Quackity began. "The fact that we haven't been hunted down for whatever the fuck happened with Eret really says something."

"So we're on our own," Sapnap said. "Karl might not even be able to access the Archives without people finding us."

"Well I guess we'll have to get off the grid," Skeppy said.

"I think we might need to do more than that," Bad said. "George's phone just got a burner text."

"What is it?" Karl asked.

"Houston. 617," Bad readout.

"What the fuck does that mean?" Dream muttered.

"I'm guessing June 17th," Bad replied. "That's in two weeks."

"Guess we're going to Houston," Sapnap said.

Chapter End Notes

no updates this sunday because it will be the start of Karlnap week and I need to speedrun my fics. hopefully there will be an update for the next Sunday.

until then though, sub to user!!

i will (optimistically and hopefully) be posting 7/7 karlnap week fics.

comments are super appreciated!! this fic is speedrunning to overtake my most popular fic and that's so wild to me. don't forget to kudos, it helps people find the fic!

follow me if you want, on twt: @noimnotJJ

until then, see you at day 1 Karlnap week!

Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

okay i'm late i'm late

I finished karlnap week though, idk how many of you were here for that

i'm not gonna say anything else so here you go, I hope you enjoy this !!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"We're kidnapping Professor Ponk."

"We're *not* kidnapping Professor Ponk."

"Well, we're kidnapping someone."

"We are not kidnapping anyone, holy muffin."

Dream was lying on his hotel bed, head hung over the side, leg raised, and resting on top of the headboard. It was quite an odd position to be lying in, but the fact is that Dream was restless. He has been for days, and if this position is what works for him to have to listen to Bad and Skeppy bicker during their briefing, then so be it.

"Wait," Quackity interjected the debate between Skeppy and Bad. "Didn't Ponk and Sam date or something?"

"Did they?" Bad exclaimed.

"That was like two years ago Q," Sapnap said. "Didn't they break up?"

"*Did they?*" Bad gasped loudly.

"Bad, what is wrong with you?" Skeppy stared at his own partner in discontent. "How do you not know any of this? I've told you this before."

"Have you?"

"Bad's high right now isn't he," Quackity sneered.

"Am not!" Bad exclaimed.

"We're kidnapping Ponk!" Skeppy said. "We have to, we don't have a choice."

"Sam's gonna kill us," Bad yelled back. "We can't kidnap his- whatever he is."

"You didn't even know Sam and Ponk were a thing," Skeppy said.

"Sam isn't even in Texas, how would he know?" Dream mumbled lazily. "Besides, if they broke up, who cares if we borrow Ponk for a few days?"

"*Borrow*, that's a funny word," Bad scrunched up his nose mockingly. "You want to *borrow* a person, against his will?"

"Look, we don't know if he would be against it, to begin with," Sapnap said. "He could be on board and-"

"Likely," Quackity said sarcastically. "His boyfriend is Awesamdude, the ex-Pandora's Vault Warden."

"Yeah but they broke up," Karl said. "I would assume for differences, and maybe-"

"That's a stretch," Dream interjected. "I wouldn't pull something like this on the off chance that he *might* be our side. I really don't wanna piss off Sam, or Ponk for that matter. We're one misstep away from having not only our own agents on our tails but the local police, FBI, CIA-"

"I mean, we did let a bunch of criminals into the street," Karl said. "I chauffeured them, actually. Three of them. Underaged little rats-"

"We just need the access to Project Overworld," Skeppy said. "Ponk is the best access to it."

"We don't even *know* that," Bad said.

"Project Overworld involves a satellite, the biggest space center is in Houston, Ponk works at the Sam Houston State University about less than two hours away from Houston-" Skeppy listed off. "Ponk used to be a thing or is still a thing with Sam? And Sam works for Herobrine, Project Overworld is a Herobrine project-"

"Yes, but we're grasping at straws here," Bad said. "There's no better indication whether he's actually involved in Project Overworld, we're just running close to the 17th and everyone is panicking."

"Look, if we want to get to Project Overworld-" Sapnap sighed. "I agree with Bad, Ponk is the best option we have and he may even help out, also I'm not above kidnapping Ponk. But we don't even know if Eret is looking for Project Overworld access, or if that's what they're doing in Houston."

"What else could they want? It's the 16th today, and there hasn't been any movement. What do they want? What could they steal?" Quackity theorized. "Forget I said that, Wilbur might just want to steal a goddamn plane or something."

"How *do* you know Wilbur, by the way?" Dream piped up. "That looked personal."

"You mean he dropped me in the ocean one time when we were fighting on a Helicopter?" Quackity replied sarcastically. "Which didn't happen, by the way, it's purely theoretical, but if it did happen, it would be a valid reason to hate a world-class criminal."

The room was silent following this. But then Karl started giggling. Then Sapnap joined in because he physically can't stop himself from taking joy from Karl's laughter. Bad and Skeppy were next, and even Quackity laughed at his own demise. Once the room was laughing, Dream managed to let out a little chuckle of his own.

It had been a really tense two weeks, and Dream was thankful he can manage a little laugh, feeling

his back and shoulder relax just a little bit and he listened to his friends stop fighting and just blissfully laughing, even for a few moments.

Turns out, Houston 617 was a shitty message that was nowhere close to being easily decoded, and George was also very quick to figure out his phone was tapped that they had no additional information. Dream suspects it was that Fundy person, their computer guy.

So here they were, in a cheap hotel room in Houston, seeing as how they can't, or would rather not use a Herobrine warehouse facility, discussing whether or not they should kidnap one of their fellow agent's ex-boyfriend.

"This could be another Davenport thing," Karl piped up. "Aside from everything they did against you guys, they also stole diamonds from Brouillard. They weren't there for the guns, they were there for the diamonds. That looks like it had nothing to do with Herobrine."

"Well, Herobrine must have something to do with Davenport," Dream replied. "It's Eret, she's hardly ever doing something for shits and giggles."

"Flashbacks to the Monarch Heists," Sapnap said sarcastically. "Come on Dream, you know very well she'll take whatever she wants."

"So you think it's a coincidence that they were at the casino stealing diamonds from Brouillard?" Dream asked.

"No, I think Techno likes to mess with you, and Techno did just that," Skeppy said. "I remember that from *our* training days. Hell, he's actually the reason I shot Bad."

"What?" Quackity exclaimed. "You what?"

"It was a bet, don't worry about it-" Skeppy waved off and Bad just shook his head. Quackity just stared blankly at his colleagues.

"Yeah well Techno likes to mess around with soulmates too, he's also the reason I threw a knife at Skeppy," Bad said.

"Wai-" Before Sapnap could finish speaking, Skeppy had already turned to Bad and gasped.

"You *what*?" Skeppy yelled. "You said it was an accident!"

"It was an accident that you moved and got hit, it wasn't an accident that I threw it," Bad reasoned.

"What? Bad, Bad, you're lying," Skeppy scoffed.

"I mean," Bad shrugged. "He said I couldn't hit the target without hitting you. Technically I won."

"Bad!" Skeppy yelled.

"Mom and dad are fighting," Quackity grimaced as he shuffled and lied down next to Dream. "Dad and dad?"

"No don't say that," Sapnap looked absolutely disgusted.

"Can we get back to the big issue here?" Dream said.

"Are we kidnapping Ponk or not?" Karl said.

"Yes." "No."

Bad and Skeppy glared at each other and sighed.

"Not yet," Sapnap said. "I might-"

For the first time in those few hours, Dream got up from lying down. He propped his body up with his elbows and turned to Sapnap expectingly.

"Might what?" Dream asked.

"I might have a guy that might know more about what *could* be going on," Sapnap said.

"And you're only bringing this up today?" Quackity asked. "One day before the 17th?"

"Look, it's complicated," Sapnap said. "I don't even know if he's still in Houston. Last I checked he was, but-"

"When was the last time you checked?" Bad asked.

"Six months ago?" Sapnap winced.

"But you can get to him? You can contact him despite not having checked in six months," Skeppy questioned.

"Yeah," Sapnap said. "Yeah," he started to nod further. "Yeah, if he's free, he'll see me."

"Who is he?" Karl asked.

Sapnap inhaled a deep breath, cursing inwardly at the fact that of course, he had to tell them. He was the one who brought it up, he was the one who knows, and he needed to do this, for the sake of not only his friends' but apparently the world.

But still, he didn't feel good telling his team about his acquaintance, let alone Karl. It wasn't anything bad, it was just- complicated.

"He was a guy I knew from Black Ops," Sapnap said. "Uhm-" he hesitated. "He- he passed Herobrine training actually, but then left very unexpectedly. I'm not sure why, but if it's anything bad or illegal-"

Sapnap glanced around the room and looked into his friends' eyes intently, looking for a reaction. For a second there he knew exactly what Dream must've felt like.

"I promised he'd be safe," Sapnap concluded. "No snitches."

"That's what you're worried about?" Quackity scoffed immediately. "Like we didn't rob a casino vault two weeks ago?"

"My soulmate is a sniper," Dream stared at his best friend flatly. "You're joking, right."

"Your soulmate apparently only shoots bastards," Sapnap said. "I don't know if he ever did, or what he does, but I know- he was a very good Black Ops agent. Very, very good. And that meant some really sketchy shit."

"Call him," Bad piped up.

"Really?" Skeppy asked.

It was a very odd stance in which Bad was the one encouraging a potentially dangerous situation with a potentially dangerous person, and Skeppy being the one questioning it.

"Either we risk it and meet Sapnap's guy, or risk whatever the hell Project Overworld could be," Bad said. "I don't like the sound of Project Overworld."

"Alright," Sapnap said, taking his phone out as he walked towards the door. "I'll be back."

It was less than two hours later that Dream and Sapnap were at a diner in the middle of nowhere outskirts of massive Houston after a 45-minute drive from their hotel.

Corner booth, as one does when you wanna meet some sketchy person, the two sat and waited at the place of choice Sapnap's acquaintance has requested. Speaking of which-

"How come I don't know this guy?" Dream asked. "You went through training with me. If you got recruited immediately after your Black Ops run, doesn't that mean he should've been in training with us?"

"No, actually," Sapnap said. "He went through the training first. One of Herobrine's best shooters, best trainees. There was a mission, my first mission and they needed an extra shooter who could do what he needed to be done, and um- apparently Herobrine lent him out."

"Lent him out? Like a fucking car?" Dream questioned.

"He was very good at what he did," Sapnap said. "I went into Herobrine because of him. He was supposed to come back after his Black Ops run. But then he did one more mission, one more trip without me. And he never-"

Dream saw the look on his best friend's face, eyebrows furrowed, forehead wrinkles, jaws clenched too tight.

"He never came back," Sapnap said. "Never came back to Herobrine either," he added.

"I mean, he's alive Sapnap," Dream said.

"Yeah, right," Sapnap muttered softly.

"You checked on him six months ago," Dream stated though it was closer to a question. "But when was the last time you talked to him?"

Sapnap inhaled a deep breath, knowing whatever he'd just talked about was being listened to by his entire team. Karl included. Karl especially.

"Seven years ago," Sapnap said. "Before he left."

"Shit-" Dream said. "Sapnap, how would he-"

"He knows, I know he knows," Sapnap said.

In awfully perfect timing, the door of the diner swung open and rang the little bell placed on top of the frame. Dream's eyes flicked up to the blond that sauntered into the room.

White hoodie raised to cover half of his head, a chain necklace peaking underneath, sitting on his collarbones. He was biting on some kind of lollipop, letting it stick out one side of his mouth. Hands both inside his pocket, eyes scanning through the nearly nonexistent occupants of the diner before his eyes fell onto Sapnap.

His lips curved into a smirk, one eyebrow raised in amusement as he started to walk over.

"You son of a bitch," He scoffed, mouth still sucking on a bleeding red lollipop. "It's actually you."

Sapnap had already gotten up from his seat and extended a hand. With a clasp of hands, pulling each other into a hug.

Dream watched as Sapnap relaxed, just a little bit but noticeable enough, his face smiling a little brighter.

"Punzo," Sapnap greeted.

"Snapmap," Punz replied back with a challenging smile.

"This is my teammate, Dream," Sapnap introduced.

"I'm Punz," The man winked, stretching his hand out. "Nice to meet you."

"I'm Dream," Dream replied as he Took Punz's hand and shook it. "Thanks for meeting us."

"No problem, anything for Sapnap," Punz said.

Though Punz was slightly oblivious to it, Dream fully heard Sapnap inhale deeply and hold his breath, a strained smile on his face. The three of them sat back in the booth, settling themselves in as the waitress began to fill their cups with black coffee.

"So what's up baby boy? What's been going on?" Punz asked.

The two Herobrine agents froze for two very different reasons. Dream shifted his jaw as he slowly took a sip of his coffee, regardless of the fact that he hated black coffee actually, but needed desperately to hide a smile, a laugh, or just pure fucking confusion. Sapnap on the other hand just looked at the ceiling, hints of pink on his cheeks.

"Punz, c'mon-" Sapnap muttered.

"Oh, sorry," Punz said. "No he was- sorry, we called him baby boy because he was the youngest in our team," he tried to explain to Dream.

"Right," Dream said.

"Well anyway," Punz was quick to move on. "How's it been? You look good. What are you doing right now?"

"Working," Sapnap said. "Working at uh-"

"Still huh?" Punz hummed amusedly.

"Yep," Sapnap answered curtly.

"What are you doing in Houston?" Punz asked. "And how long are you staying? I could take you to a bar. You don't fucking need to be IDed anymore, thank god- I'm thinking drinks and pool-"

"Punz-" Sapnap said.

"By the way, have you heard from everyone else?" Punz continued. "Boomer, Ant-"

"Punz," Sapnap said a little more stern than before. "We have something to do in Houston and it's kinda an emergency."

"Oh?" Punz said. "Okay then, go on."

"You heard anything on the street about Herobrine's prodigal son?" Dream asked.

"Wow," Punz chuckled. "Straight out of the gate huh? He does *not* hold back. I like him," Punz turned to Sapnap who lightly rolled his eyes.

"Have you?" Sapnap asked.

"Well, you're right, I think his crew is in Houston or the surrounding area," Punz said.

"Do you know what they're planning?" Sapnap shot yet another question.

"It's more like an *i-know-a-guy-who-knows-a-guy-who-saw-them-at-Walmart*," Punz shrugged.
"Fuck if I know what they're doing."

Sapnap and Dream glanced at each other, contemplating on whether or not they should ask him yet another question, a more specific and revealing question.

"Have you heard about something called Project Overworld?" Dream asked.

And there it is.

The way Punz's face stopped, tongue swiping across his teeth, jaw shifting as he stared into his coffee with an interested look, only a small chuckle as he continued to pour sugar and cream into his coffee. Dream knew they'd hit just the mark.

"Don't know anything about it," Punz said, blatantly lying to their faces.

"Oh, don't do that to me Punz," Turns out Dream wasn't the only one who caught the lie. Of course, Sapnap knew. After all, Sapnap knew Punz better than most. "Don't fucking do that to me Punz."

"I don't know what you're talking about," Punz said coolly. "Aren't you guys the one working for Herobrine?"

"You know something," Sapnap's tone jumped straight to accusatory. "You got anything to do with it?"

"I mean," Punz said. "I already told you, I don't know baby boy." The tone this time was much more condescending, that Sapnap had to physically move back in his seat.

"Punz," Dream pleaded. "A lot of people might get hurt because of this. You could help us, you could-"

"I don't know why you think I'd help you," The sudden hostility gave Dream whiplash. "I said I

didn't know."

"I think you're lying," Dream stated.

"Well I think so are you," Punz challenged.

"Why'd you leave Punz?" Sapnap shot out of nowhere.

Both Dream and Punz were shocked out of their tense stare off, looking at Sapnap who was looking back at Punz and only Punz.

"What?" Punz mumbled.

"You heard me," Sapnap muttered darkly. "Why'd you leave?" He repeated.

"I um-" Punz stuttered. "Uh- I don't-"

"You know exactly what I'm asking about," Sapnap pressed further. "Why did you leave?" The emphasis on his words was dangerously low.

"I had to take care of my brother," Punz said. "But that's not what you wanna hear."

"No, because I think you're lying," Sapnap said. "What's that on your neck? I've been looking at it for about the last five minutes, and it looks really familiar."

Punz shifted and pulled on his hoodie string, covering the dark tattoo on his neck that he's been trying to hide. His eyes flared angrily as his tongue lapped his bottom lip, a scoff escaping his mouth.

"He works for Davenport," Dream sighed the moment he finally caught on. "Fuck."

"God-fucking-dammit Sapnap," Quackity's voice rang in their ear.

The other four team members were huddled against each other in the back of the van, parked about a 5-minute drive from the diner. Punz had requested that they have no backup, seeing as how he was already outnumbered 2 to 1.

They were hearing very scuffed audio from their earpieces, which could only work so well being so far out from where they are, watching the scene unfold only from one security camera the diner had that Karl had managed to tap into.

"What?" Bad chimed in.

"Been checking up on me?" Punz asked. "You *fucking* liar-"

"I haven't lied about anything," Sapnap shot back. "Where's your brother?"

"Don't fucking bring him into this," Punz shook his head. "I never lied about what I do, you never asked. You on the other hand-"

"What? Spit it out," Sapnap said. "What did I do?"

"You got a gun on me or are you just very, very happy to see me?" Punz muttered.

In a flash of movement so fast, Sapnap had brought his gun out from underneath the table, aiming straight for Punz's face. Punz moves just as quick, taking the gun he'd strapped to his leg and pointed right back at Sapnap.

A scream let out from one of the customers in the diner.

"Everyone, go," Dream commanded. "Everyone, go now, out the back!"

They were scrambling, running, waitresses, cooks, customers alike, all leaving the diner barren but a single agent, and two stalemate bastards.

"You said no backup," Punz said. "I was ready to meet one to two, but you *had* to bring more people. I saw them from a mile away."

"We didn't *bring* back up," Dream replied.

"Yeah?" Punz questioned. He moved his gun from pointing at Sapnap and pointed it at Dream. Sapnap cocked his gun.

Dream barely adjusted to the fact that he was now staring down the barrel of the gun when he saw a shaky little red dot climb up the white hoodie and up to Punz's forehead.

"No back up huh?" Punz said. "And you think I was gonna tell you anything?"

"Stand down," Dream said. "We said no back-up, Skeppy, *stand down*."

"Dream, we're where you left us, miles out from the diner," Skeppy said. "I'm not sniping."

Dream inhaled very sharply, eyes flickering to turn and see where the laser was coming from but knew he couldn't move much while at gunpoint. He knew who was there though.

"Sniper's not with us," Sapnap said. "Punz, please."

"No," Punz said. "Fuck this-"

"Give it up Punz," Dream said. "You can't walk out of here, you're outnumbered."

"Not for long," Punz shrugged.

Chills went down Sapnap's spine as he looked instinctively towards the security camera at the corner of the room.

"There are cars," Bad suddenly said. "Three SUVs speeding towards the diner."

"How do you know?" Dream asked.

"Because we just *saw them* drive past us!" Skeppy yelled. "He's stalling, he's stalling."

There was heavy rattling and panicking happening on the other side of the earpiece as Quackity hurriedly went to the driver's seat to start the car.

"We're coming, T minus fi-" Quackity said.

"No, stay put," Dream said.

"Dream, they're coming," Karl said. "A lot of them, you won't be able to-"

"You guys won't help either, I'd rather you safe-" Dream said. "Stay put. That's an order."

Punz continued to look at Dream, who was still able to maintain a civil conversation despite being in immediate danger. But then again, he himself wasn't shaking even with the red dot dancing on his face.

"You brought back up," Sapnap said.

"You did too," Punz replied.

"They're three minutes out," Karl said. "Sapnap, get out of there."

"You will never see your brother again," Sapnap piped up.

It seemed like a random statement out of nowhere, but then again, it was enough to catch Punz off guard. Punz froze and quickly pointed his gun back at Sapnap.

"That a threat baby boy?" Punz spat venomously.

"No," Sapnap said.

And he left it at that.

"Anything happens to him-" Punz growled.

"It won't," Sapnap replied.

"The cars are one minute out, WILder, get *out* of there," Karl yelled.

Sapnap brought down his gun first, knowing if anything, at least the Sniper still had Punz. However, it wasn't too long until Punz lowered his gun too. The laser disappeared seconds after.

"Go," Punz said cockily, head tilting back and nudging out the back door. "Bye," He sang.

Sapnap and Dream shared a look before bolting out the back door of the kitchen.

"Okay now you can come and get us," Dream said.

"You're joking-" Bad said, but Quackity had already started the car. "We can't get to you, they're already outside the diner."

"It's fine, we'll stay alive until-" Dream didn't when to finish his sentence when a van came rolling in front of him, door already open.

"Get in."

Eret.

"Stay put Q," Dream said. "We got a ride."

"You're fucking kidding me," Quackity said, but his voice blurred out in Sapnap's and Dream's ears as they sighed in defeat and got into the van.

"Just stay put, you'll see us when we drive, just follow," Dream said.

Inside the van was 4 people. Wilbur, sitting in the driver's seat. Fundy, who neither of them has really seen so they'd assumed it was the computer guy. Eret, who smirked at them through her sunglasses. And Geor-

"Now why the fuck did you do that?" Dream demanded.

"Do what? Save your life?" George snapped back. "You're welcome."

"We weren't in *danger*," Dream hissed. "He got spooked because he saw your ass hiding with a rifle- we were fine!"

"You were having a meeting with someone who works for Mr. J-" George said. "In the middle of nowhere. I get that you're bot criminals, but you can't *possibly* be so stupid that you don't know that's where take people to kill them."

"Are you just gonna keep nagging me?" Dream raised an eyebrow at George. "Really? You told me to live my own life, you told me you want nothing to do with me, and two weeks later you come bargain-"

"I kept my end of the deal, you didn't," George said accusingly. Dream furrowed his eyebrows in confusion and tilted his head. George rolled his eyes in reply. "Oh just because you couldn't find us, doesn't mean we couldn't find *you* back. You were stalking me."

"I was not," Dream said defensively.

"What are you doing in Houston then?" George clapped back and Dream immediately shuts up. "Thought so."

"Why the fuck are you so quiet then?" Dream derailed the subject and turned to Eret.

"Just watching," Eret said. "I'm trying to figure out what about you is so charming that 404 fell for that stunt you pulled with his phone."

"I didn't fal-" George fumed as he glared at Eret.

"I don't see it," Eret scrunched up his nose.

"You don't see it?" Wilbur asked. "I do, he's kinda cute."

Dream turned to look at Wilbur who simply winked at him through the rearview mirror.

"Eyes on the road Wilbur," George said.

"Jealous Gogy, jealous Gogy," Wilbur giggled and Fundy laughed along.

Both George and Dream were growing slightly pink that even Sapnap couldn't keep a straight face.

"That's your van following us, correct?" Fundy asked as the laughter died down. "If not, we're gonna have to lose them."

"They're ours," Sapnap said once he saw Quackity's outline through the bulletproof windshield.

"You didn't answer my question," Dream said. "Why were you there?"

"You think you're going to have a conversation with Mr. J's new head of weapons without us knowing?" Eret said.

"What?" Sapnap said, suddenly interested in the conversation again. "He's not, he's just a shooter."

"Well, not anymore," Fundy joined the conversation. "He just got promoted because Marakova is waiting for trial. I'd say pretty occupied."

"Yeah, Sapnap what the fuck were you thinking?" Dream shot back. "Why'd take us to-"

"He was gonna help," Sapnap said. "He *is helping*."

"Right," Eret drawled. "Because Mr. J's head of weapons is gonna help you."

"I didn't know he got promoted okay?" Sapnap said. "And he wasn't gonna hurt me, so drop it."

The car pulled into a stop at an empty parking lot, the occupants hurriedly exiting the car to escape the weird tension that got built up very uncomfortably through the ride.

The other van parked next to them, the rest of their team exiting for them to convene into an impromptu meeting.

"Right, I'm sick of this," Quackity said. "What the fuck is Project Overworld?"

Eret glanced around looked at his own team, who sat back quietly.

"It's a Herobrine project. Horrific. Disgusting," Eret said.

"You gonna elaborate?" Skeppy asked.

"Nope," Eret smiled. "You just have to take my word for it."

Dream inhaled a deep breath.

"Okay. What happens tomorrow?" Dream asked.

"Project Overworld launches," Wilbur replied. "We want it stopped."

"Because it's bad?" Karl said slowly and Eret nodded.

"Mr. J has *something* to do with the project, I just don't know what," Fundy said.

"That's why you came to help?" Bad asked.

"No," Eret said.

This whole time though, Dream was looking at how uncomfortably silent George was, arms wrapped around himself like he was hiding as if he hadn't just carried a sniper rifle not 10 minutes ago.

"I have a proposition," Eret declared.

"No," Sapnap said.

"You haven't even heard the proposition!" Eret exclaimed defensively.

"Didn't have to," Sapnap said. "No."

"Go," Dream resigned.

"It's Herobrine project, there's a Herobrine facility in Houston, you guys are Herobrine agents-" Eret muttered.

"You want us to break in for you?" Dream asked.

"With," Eret said. "Break-in *with* us."

"Oh god-" Skeppy said.

"Look," Eret said. "You were spending so much time trying to figure out what we did, now you don't have to. We just told you what we're going to do and invited you even."

"Eret," Dream sighed. "As much as we'd love to accept whatever you say on face value, we can't because you're a pathological liar-"

"Hurtful," Eret commented:

"Dream, you now know Herobrine's a little crooked," Wilbur said. "They're doing questionable sketchy shit, and you're just gonna have to believe us. We're not upholding the same moral standards, but we have the same goal, I assure you."

"Sure you do," Quackity said. "*Sure. You. Do.*"

"Look, look, here's what I'll say-" Wilbur sighed, rolling his eyes at Quackity. "He's what I'll. Quackity clearly doesn't trust me and that's very fair, I'll step out."

"Sure," Eret said after a moment. "Yeah, sure, we'll do that. If you say yes- I mean you trust George, you can tolerate your soulmate-" And now George's perpetual eye roll made sense. "You can have him. The whole mission, just you and him-"

"Well-" Wilbur interjected.

"Okay, your team and George, and Fundy-" Eret said.

"And the kids, you can take the kids too," Wilbur said.

"We'll take our hands off it. You won't have to work with us at all," Eret raised his hands literally to prove a point.

There was a moment of silence where they actually contemplated it. And they still were thinking about it, all in all about what Project Overworld could potentially bring.

"We'll let you know," Sapnap was the one who answered.

"Good!" Eret clapped cheerfully. "You don't even have to contact me, you can contact 404 immediately when you have your decision."

And with nothing else left to say, Dream watched as his soulmate climbed into the back of the van without another word. They drove away, and once the car was out of their sight did Dream finally let out a breath that he's been holding on to.

"Well," Dream said. "Decisions? I don't know, guys I'm-"

Sapnap held up a little black flash drive up in front of his team and everyone went silent.

"What is that?" Skeppy asked.

"Everything Punz knows about Project Overworld," Sapnap said. "We can look at it and then decide."

"H-how-" Quackity stuttered.

"I *said* he wasn't gonna hurt me," Sapnap said as he tossed the drive over to Karl who caught it with one hand. "Things went to shit but-"

He didn't need to finish his sentence. Not that he could, he wouldn't know what more to say. Worse is that he couldn't even look at Karl.

"I'll look through and we'll-" Karl nodded. "And we'll know more by tonight."

Sapnap took a few hours to readjust himself from the whirlwind that is what has just happened today with him and Punz, also his entire team and Eret's entire team coming into the picture.

Once he got over that, however hard that may be, Sapnap made his way to Karl's room. Standing nervously at the door, he raised his hand up to the door and knocked.

"Karl?" Sapnap called softly.

"Give me a minute," He heard Karl shuffle around his room before unlocking the door and looking at Sapnap. "Yeah? What's up?"

"Are you busy?" Sapnap asked.

"Uhm-" Karl looked back to his laptop sitting on top of the desk, contemplating his actual answer.

"It's fine if you are-" Sapnap said hurriedly. "I mean we did ask you to go through Project Overworld, so if you're bus-"

"No, no, no-" Karl replied just as fast. "It's decoding some things right now, it's fine. I'm not that busy."

There was a bit of an awkward silence that fell on them. Both stood in the hallway like a bunch of doofuses.

"Do you need something?" Karl asked.

"I, uhm-" Sapnap was fumbling around, balancing on his heels. "Nothing. We just haven't hung out in a while."

"Oh," Karl broke into a grin. "Come in, come in-"

"I mean we've been so wrapped up with the whole Herobrine vs Dream's soulmate and we just haven't gotten to talk," Sapnap continued to justify his visit even as he walked into Karl's room.

"Yes, Sapnap," Karl chuckled. "I understand."

"I mean, I love your help and everything, I mean we all do- but uh-" Sapnap smiled sheepishly. "I was kinda hoping we could-"

"Finally get on that date number 2?" Karl asked.

"How about date number 1," Sapnap mumbled. "Can't believe our first official date was you coming to dinner with the entire team."

"I think it's endearing," Karl said as he checked his laptop one last time before walking closer to Sapnap until they were face to face "That means your team cares about you."

"Our team," Sapnap corrected to which Karl simply rolled his eyes.

Karl took Sapnap's hand and walked them both over back to his bed. He pulled the bedcovers away and climbed up, sitting down before patting down the empty space next to him so Sapnap would follow him. Once Sapnap settled next to him, Karl pulled the covers back and threw Sapnap's arm around him, snuggling his head into his chest.

"You called me Wilder," Sapnap said suddenly. "Earlier."

"I mean, that's your name," Karl mumbled.

"I know, you just-" Sapnap said. "Haven't called me Wilder since we started working together. That was the first time in a while."

"Do you not like it?" Karl asked. "Sorry, I got a little panicked-"

"No, no-" Sapnap said, his hand absentmindedly trailing up and down the length of Karl's arms, softly caressing his skin with his fingertips. "I like it. A lot, actually. Just sad that you can't use it too much because of identity and criminals."

"Well I can use it when we're alone," Karl said. "Wilder. Wilder," He playfully mumbled. "Mr. Wilder. Wild-"

Sapnap brought his hand down to Karl's chin and gently lifted it up, slowly pulling him forward

until their faces were inches away from each other. Karl stopped talking entirely, breathe disappearing from his throat as he gazed into Sapnap's eyes.

"Hi," Sapnap muttered softly.

"Hi," Karl replied.

Sapnap continued to look down, observing how Karl's eyes moved and shifted, calculated and definitely on the edge of thought.

"You wanna ask me a question," Sapnap stated.

"No," Karl answered a little too quickly. "No, I don't."

"It's okay," Sapnap said kindly. "You can ask."

"Well it's-" Karl bit his lip nervously. "Punz, was it?" Sapnap simply nodded, knowing the following question he's going to hear. "Is he- did you?"

"No," Sapnap said. "No he isn't, no we didn't," He answered conclusively.

"But you guys are so-" Karl tilted his head grimacing at the thought.

"I'm not gonna lie to you," Sapnap said. "I was 19, barely legal to carry a weapon. He was older, protected me, kept me safe through the worst of the worst of Black Ops mission."

"You feel grateful," Karl summarized. "And maybe had a little crush?"

"A crush is me driving 15 minutes out of my route every day for about two weeks, just to bring a cup of coffee to the cute guy who worked at the Archives," Sapnap chuckled, watching fondly as Karl's face grew bright red.

"Shut up," Karl pouted.

"No, it was just-" Sapnap said. "A lot. To go through all that together. What we had was just different."

"Is he your soulmate?" Karl suddenly asked.

Karl felt his heart rising to double its normal pace, immediately regretting when second he asked and felt even worse when he was greeted with a moment silence. But then the deep rumbles of Sapnap's laughter melted his heart and he sighed.

"No, of course not," Sapnap said. "We played the knife song one time because we were drunk and stupid, so definitely not-" Sapnap held up his left ring finger, showing Karl a rather large dent and scarring from the unfortunate incident.

"Ouch," Karl muttered.

"Yeah," Sapnap chuckled. "Besides," He shifted and pulled Karl closer to him. "I don't care much for soulmates."

"You don't?" Karl asked.

"Dream does, and he's-" Sapnap mumbled. "Lucky? Unlucky? That he found his soulmate. I don't really-"

"No?" Karl looked more intensely at Sapnap, who simply shrugged and shook his head.

"I think-" Sapnap's voice was low, bring Karl's face closer to him with a curved finger under Karl's. "-meeting someone like you, gave me a better perspective. I'd rather have someone who chose to be with me than someone who's destined to be with me."

"I-" Karl's voice disappeared in his throat. "Really?"

"You followed me to New York, then California, then Las Vegas, and now Houston," Sapnap smirked cockily. "Did it matter to you? Left your job, moved away? I mean you didn't know if I was your soulmate- still don't, actually."

Karl's heartbeat was not faster this time around, though it was loud and pounding in his ears. He felt warm- hot actually, face not an inch away from Sapnap, lips brushing against each other.

"No," Karl mumbled.

"Good," Sapnap said. "Because I like you. A lot. Soulmate or not, and I don't care."

With one tug of his chin, Sapnap brought Karl's lips down to his, melding into a soft and gentle kiss. He could feel Karl thinking, movements a little unsure as he shifted to prop himself better but soon melting into Sapnap's arm as Sapnap placed his hands on Karl's cheeks. Karl pushed slightly, deepening the kiss when his computer beeped far too loud, and wouldn't stop beeping.

"Oh god!" Karl exclaimed as he climbed off of a chuckling Sapnap. "That scared me."

Karl ran to the laptop and started clicking the off button for the alert.

"Are the files done?" Sapnap asked, standing up from the bed to walk over to Karl, placing his arms on the table, encasing Karl in his seat.

"Yeah, and I think it found something-" Karl said, furiously clicking through the files so fast that Sapnap couldn't keep up. "Did I bite you by the way?" He asked sheepishly, though his eyes didn't leave the screen. "I feel like I bit you when I got jump-scared."

"You didn't bite me, Karl, I'm okay," Sapnap said placing a kiss on top of Karl's head.

"Oh god," Karl said.

"What is it?" Sapnap hummed absentmindedly, his face still buried in Karl's hair.

"Look," Karl said, staring at the screen.

Sapnap begrudgingly left his nest of Karl's hair and brought his face closer to the screen. Punz did a very well job. Even with the number of firewalls they had to pass through, he'd given them enough information to get everything they needed to know.

And it wasn't pretty.

"I guess we're breaking into Herobrine's base tomorrow," Sapnap said.

Chapter End Notes

so... punz huh ? wild

i can't even promise when the next update will be because I'm always late.

in the meantime though, I am going to promo my [Karlnap week collection](#), if anyone is interested, I made some banger fics if you haven't read them.

More specifically one which is a [Hospital/Mafia soulmate AU](#) which if you like Got Your 6, you may like that one !!

I'll be posting some other one shots. I have SapNotFound, DreamNap, and KarlNotFound planned out that might come out at random times so sub to my user to get emails when I post something !

thank you for the comment and kudos and subs, this is my most successful fic so I hope this ends well.

my twitter is @noimnotJJ and you can interact with me, and vote for prompts and watch me brainrot

bye

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

Long overdue update, chapter 8! it's like almost 7.5 k though so i hope it makes up for it.

we're starting to get somewhere with the story!

I know it's like super late but i do hope you guys enjoy it !!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"How do you feel?"

"Fuck you," Dream replied instantly.

"Woah, okay," Sapnap chuckled lightly, arms raised in surrender. "No need to bite me."

Sapnap and Dream were standing in the parking lot waiting for the rest of their team to come down and meet them. It was sort of intentional, the two of them being the earliest one there to spare a bit of time so the two of them can talk.

"How do you *think* I feel?" Dream hissed.

"I thought you wanted this?" Sapnap commented easily leaning against the car.

"Sapnap," Dream sighed. "I *wanted* to work with my soulmate. For him not to be a jackass, for him to have my back when we run into missions. That was fun."

"You have a crooked way of thinking about *fun*," Sapnap scrunched up his nose. "I was standing in front of the bomb watching it tick down."

"Yeah, and my soulmate helped you defuse it. That was fun," Dream repeated and Sapnap simply rolled his eyes. "What is not fun is working together with my soulmate, trying to break into Herobrine," He sighed. "I mean, what- like what even would- it's stupid like we don't even know-"

"Relax," Sapnap said flatly.

"I can't even think-" Dream exclaimed frustratedly. "I don't know what possessed me, us, all of us to work together with- them!"

"I said, relax," Sapnap placed his hands on Dream's shoulders and shook him very harshly. "God, what crawled up your ass and died?"

Dream only replied to him with the deadliest of glares. Anyone else, especially looking at it on top of the mask that Dream wears all the time, would feel at least a little bit scared. Sapnap wasn't one for that though. He's seen Dream snort water up to his nose because he was laughing too hard.

"Come on," Sapnap softly slapped Dream on the cheek. "Get your shit together, you're not going to be a fucking mess in front of the love of your life."

"He's not the love of my life," Dream mumbled softly.

"He's the just the guy that the universe destined to be eternally tied to you," Sapnap said sarcastically.

"Okay fuck off-" Dream scoffed.

"Seriously dude," Sapnap furrowed his eyebrows. "Two weeks ago you were saying how you want him in your life, how he's got the face shaped like an angel, how you're willing to look past a bunch of shitty things he's done, what's up?"

Dream was not subtle. He was not exactly surprised Sapnap read his nerves and emotion through the surface and though honestly, he wasn't exactly trying to hide it either.

"I think he's fine," Dream said. "Call me biased or whatever, but I think he's got some good in him and that night, he-" Dream leaned back against the car, side by side with Sapnap. "I don't know, he didn't listen to Wilbur or Eret, and he stayed to come to talk to me, and yeah, maybe it was to take back Techno's guns, but it felt like he was thinking on his own." Dream looked at the ground and kicked dust, fussing around like a child in a playground. "Yesterday wasn't like that."

"You mean when he pointed a rifle at Punz?" Sapnap winced at the memory of it. "Look, I don't know him that well, but running into your rescue seems like his brand," Sapnap shrugged. "Not the first time he's done it."

"Yeah, but the whole Project Overworld and- It looked like he was doing what Wilbur and Eret were telling him to do," Dream reasoned. "And yes, Project Overworld is doing some sketchy shit, and Herobrine is getting sketchier by the minute, but I-"

"-don't trust Eret and Wilbur," Sapnap concluded. "Rightfully so."

"I'm sorry about Punz by the way, I'm-" Dream apologized. "I don't fully understand what happened still. Did he- was he upset? Why did he give you?"

"The crime-" Sapnap huffed. "-people, those fuckers were a surprise, sure. And I knew he worked with Davenport, I just didn't know he got promoted."

"But he helped us?" Dream said questioningly.

"Well, he was getting bugged, that much was clear, right?" Sapnap raised an eyebrow at his teammate. "He would've gotten killed if they caught him."

"So did he- I'm sorry if I fucked up shit for you, did he know that George wasn't your fault?" Dream said. "He looked like he meant a lot to you."

"Don't-" Sapnap cut off immediately. "Don't say shit like that and especially not in front of Karl okay?"

"Okay, sorry," Dream replied. "Sapnap, Punz isn't your-"

"No," Sapnap shot it down immediately. "I just don't want Karl to have to think about it. Like whether or not he's my soulmate. Especially the fact that we have guns, it's easy to test out, but-"

"You don't have to explain things to me Sapnap," Dream said. "I got it."

The two stood there in the most uncomfortable silence.

"Where the fuck is everyone?" Sapnap asked.

Almost like they were summoned, the rest of their team came running towards them, being very obviously late.

"We're here, we're here," Bad said hurriedly. "Okay, Dream where's George?"

"Also fucking late, apparently," Dream said distastefully.

"Language," Bad warned. "Okay, so let's go over the plan real quick."

"Bad, you know what they say," Skeppy said. "If you keep running over the plan last minute, the plan will fail."

"That's just a superstition, you know that's not real," Bad brushed off.

"Is it though?" Quackity grimaced. "Because I feel like none of our plans have worked recently."

"Well then, we should prepare for this one to fail as well, so that's why we run down before execution," Bad said cheerfully.

"Oh look," Quackity said. "Their car's here. Guess we don't have time to go over the plan, sorry Bad," He added rushedly.

Across the distance, the group could see a car zooming towards the parking lot a little over

"You guys are just lazy," Bad commented. Skeppy rolled his eyes and pressed a kiss on his cheek,

which turns out was enough to distract Bad for the time being and made him lay off everyone.

"Okay, so I'm leaving with them, you guys are going on your own," Dream clarified. "I will see you there. Go."

"Be careful, okay?" Karl said. "Here are some extra earpieces, and they should all be in range once we get to the same vicinity, and-"

"Bad tell you about the Herobrine signal jammers?" Dream questioned.

"Yeah," Karl nodded. "It'll be rough, but better than nothing."

"Okay, thanks," Dream said as he counted 5 earpieces in his right hand.

"Don't die Dream," Quackity said. "Don't be stupid," He added as he got into the driver's seat.

"Very helpful, Q, thank you," Dream said sarcastically.

Dream watched as Bad climbed into the passenger side with Quackity. Sapnap waved at Dream as his other hand fell on Karl's back, nudging him to climb in the back seat of the van before getting after him. Skeppy hung a little bit behind, looking at Dream with a little grimace.

"Careful with her, by the way," Skeppy said. "You know what she's like."

"You're being serious," Dream commented. "I don't like serious Skeppy."

"Dream," Skeppy said sternly.

"I got it, Skep," Dream replied lightly. "Go."

Skeppy was a little tense, jaw clenched but he nodded anyway. Dream stood back as Skeppy

climbed into the back with Sapnap and Karl. As soon as the door closed, Quackity started the car and started to drive away even before the other car drove into the lot.

The second car didn't take too long to arrive though, and Dream has to admit that he jumped back when the car pulled up a little too close to him. He could only roll his eyes to the thought that his soulmate may be trying to kill him. Dream stepped forward and opened the passenger side door, expecting an empty seat or for him to tell one of the kids to jump in the back only to find himself greeted by his own soulmate, looking up pretty at him.

"Mfraid your gonna have to take the back seat, darling," George's voice was playful as always that it caught Dream a little bit off guard.

George pulled the passenger door back closed even before Dream had time to think who was driving if his soulmate isn't. Dream walked and opened one of the doors to be greeted by two somewhat familiar faces, very annoying and quite irritating faces, looking at him before looking at each other. Dream silently climbed in. Only then did he notice the person in the driver's seat.

"How old are you?" Dream blurted.

"I am a *minor*," Ranboo answered with a dramatic gasp. Like clockwork, Dream heard the other two kids in the car tutted at him disapprovingly. "That's a little weird Green Man."

"He's right," George piped up teasingly. "He's a minor and it is kinda-"

"Oh shut up," Dream said. "I mean you're literally the only adult here, why is the minor driving?"

"I don't drive," George said.

"And I'm the only one with an American license so-" Ranboo pursed his lips. "Take it or leave it."

"So at least it's not illegal," Dream mumbled as he settled into his seat.

"Ranboo driving is the least illegal thing you need to worry about bossman," Tubbo chuckled as he sat back down.

"You-" Dream squinted at Tubbo. "Did we hit you with a car?"

"Yes you did, and it's incredibly rude of you," Tubbo exclaimed.

"You jumped in front of it on purpose," Dream said accusingly and Tubbo just grinned. "And you put me in the hospital," Dream pointed at Tommy.

"That I did, big man. That I did, proudly so," Tommy puffed up his chest and all Dream could do was silently fume.

"Right, introductions," George clapped his hands together. "That's Tubbo, and that's Tommy," He pointed at them respectively. "And this is Ranboo."

"I'm Dream," Dream introduced himself awkwardly. "And I can't believe that I'm going to break into a Herobrine facility with a bunch of kids."

"A bunch of kids that immobilized you in seconds," Ranboo muttered snappishly as he started to drive away.

"Why-" Dream's voice faltered off as he looked at Ranboo. He tilted his head and just continued to stare at Ranboo. "Why do you look like Techno?"

"Uh-" Ranboo said.

"Well it's obvious isn't it?" Tubbo piped up. "He-"

Tommy lunged forward and covered Tubbo's mouth just about the same time as Ranboo threw his arm back and wildly flail around to stop Tubbo from talking.

"George, he looks like Techno," Dream said. "Why does he look like Techno?"

George simply looked to the side at Ranboo with a little smile and shrugged, leaving Dream to look back and forth between the two of them

"Who's Techno?" Ranboo finally answered and Dream stared flatly at him.

"You shot Sapnap," Dream said slowly. "You had the special gun."

"Maybe," Ranboo shrugged.

"Right," Dream muttered. "And you put me in the hospital," Dream glared at Tommy.

"Technically it wasn't me," Tommy chuckled nervously. "Technically Wilbur made the smoke bomb and well-"

"So you know who Techno is," Dream insisted. "You were using his weapons."

"I just said Wilbur made the smoke bomb," Tommy exclaimed.

"No, Techno definitely made the guns and the smoke bomb, I know his gear-" Dream said.

"Well, maybe I know how to make smoke bombs green man," Tubbo snapped. "You don't know what I can do, you're underestimating me, you're-" Tubbo rambled.

"I'm not underestimating you! Realistically I know Techno's tech and-" Dream

"Ha!" Ranboo exclaimed. "Techno's tech," He sniggered.

"Wait so you definitely kno-" Dream stopped when he felt a gentle tap on his hand that was resting at the shoulder of George's seat. George didn't even need to turn back, he just kind of swatted at him.

"You really going to let three children rile you up like that?" George said, though his eyes were still on the road."

Dream would deny that he blushed, but the other residents in the car knew otherwise.

"You're just so easy, dude," Ranboo chuckled.

"He's Techno's brother," George replied, much to the rest of the car's complaints. "Though I would've thought you'd know that, seeing as how you and Techno were friends."

"Yeah, well he was a very private person," Dream mumbled.

"Maybe he just doesn't like you," Tommy muttered back.

"Call me when you turn 18, I'll fight you," Dream said.

"Okay, so that's April-" Tubbo started and Tommy threw a punch as the brunette boy laughed. "Alright, alright, I'm joking."

Dream suppressed a smile, that much he might admit. The kids aren't too bad despite the fact that they're too trained on the art of doing a lot of illegal shit. They are pretty annoying though, a little loud, really, really smart mouths, with attitudes the size of Jupiter.

A little part of him wondered how they got into this position, unclear which paths they took to get here.

Ranboo was Techno's brother. But Techno wasn't always like this, and he was hardly a reckless guardian, he wouldn't freely let his 17-year-old brother roam the streets with a bunch of criminals despite maybe being the one who puts dangerous weapons on the streets. (Only to people he trusts though, it was important to him that you knew)

Tommy and Tubbo. Dream could tell they were British, probably moved from England along with Wilbur. Though upon a closer look (or listen to be exact) their accents are quite different, both between the two boys and also with Wilbur. So the story has to be more complicated than that.

He didn't even want to begin thinking about how his soulmate knew the group. 404 was not known, never known. Traveling alone and impossible to find though turns out, he had a whole support group behind him. All this was very confusing for Dream. Turns out, it could just be that he was very bad at his job.

"Hey," George snapped his fingers a few times to catch Dream's attention. "You with us here?"

"Sorry," Dream shook his head out of his thought.

"Mr. Dream was daydreaming," Tommy taunted. "Oooh Gogy, you've got him all-"

"Tommy, I should've left you and taken Jack," George cut him off and Tommy made a little disgruntled noise before pouting and crossing his arms in his seat.

"Yeah," Dream said. "What is it?"

"Just checking if everything is fine," George said. "If everything is all plotted out. The entrance, exits-"

"George," Dream said. "I still don't know much about Project Overworld and you won't tell me. Us, you won't tell my team at all."

Dream took note of how the three kids all took a quick glance at George before quickly looking away at a secret that they are obviously keeping away from Dream's knowledge.

"Okay," George replied. "Tell me what you know, and I'll fill in the blanks."

"There was a large amount of money set aside to buy weapons," Dream said. "We found receipts and fake transactions, embezzling funds, and it was way too much for annual weapon renewals. It's like a whole armada, a whole fleet. And even then it's still too much money."

"Any guesses on why?" George was starting to sound like a school teacher.

Dream only took a deep breath.

"I think you know why," George concluded.

"You're telling me 16 *billion* dollars are set aside for Techno's weapons," Dream said in disbelief.

"That's rivaling the entire country's military budget on procurement alone, it doesn't"

"Well," George interjected. "Sixteen on the whole project," He explained. "Though a big part of the budget is for Techno's weapons, but also part of that is to get rid of Techno."

"What?" Ranboo muttered. "You never told me that. What do you mean getting rid of Techno?" His voice rising up to a higher pitch.

"Fuck," George cursed. "Sorry Ranboo, I didn't mea-"

"Your brother is a threat," Dream explained. "To Herobrine specifically."

"Oh okay, thanks for that," Ranboo said sarcastically, glaring at Dream through the rearview mirror. "Like I didn't know how dangerous people think he is, but that's fine-"

Dream watched as Tubbo stretched a hand forward and gave Ranboo a reassuring squeeze that immediately stopped his rambling.

"But what is it?" Dream continued.

"Your guess is as good as mine," George shrugged. "Only Eret knows and they're keeping it behind lock and key."

"If Eret knows, why wouldn't they tell us?" Dream furrowed his eyebrows.

A knowing silence fell across the car only leaving Dream to be the one in confusion.

"Any of us could die, big man," Tommy replied. "Us, Gogy, Wilby, Techno, even you, and your team could be gunned down. Then who's gonna do the work?"

"So we're just supposed to trust her?" Dream said. "You're asking me to trust the person who tried to kill me?"

"He tried to what?" Ranboo exclaimed.

"That's wicked," Tubbo commented.

"Yeah, with quicksand," Both Dream and George answered at the same time.

Dream looked at George in confusion though the Brit only gave him a glance from the rearview mirror. Dream was going to ask about a dozen other questions mainly *since when did you know your boss/colleague tried to kill your soulmate*, and also *how and why the fuck are you okay with it*. Unfortunately, he saw the background of the Herobrine Houston facility and decided the questions could wait for another time.

Dream could tell the rest of the car were pretty high on nerves. It must be weird for them, a group of criminals for the first time ever, are parking their car very nicely in the guest parking spot. They didn't need a back alley or nearby junkyard, or literally anything to hide their identity. Granted, the three children and the sniper dubbed 404 didn't have an identity that needs hiding from.

The car pulled to a stop, Dream immediately stepping out of the car only for Tubbo to pull the door back shut. He could only imagine why, but he wasn't going to drag a bunch of kids out into the parking lot, he's going to look like a maniac. So he could only do what a field agent waiting on a bunch of criminals alone in a car that he'd essentially been kicked out of do. Stand back and wait.

"What are you wearing?" Dream looked at Tommy the second the tall blond boy stepped out of the car.

"It's a sweater vest man," Tommy said defensively, adjusting his collars.

"Why are you wearing a sweater vest?" Dream exclaimed, looking even more confused when he'd realized that Tubbo had also had the same costume change.

"Isn't this what you American dweebs wear?" Tommy replied and George snorted.

"No, we're field agents. Why would we- take off the sweater vest," Dream nagged. "And you too, tall one."

"You can be bothered to learn my name," Ranboo said flatly, fixing the cuffs of his dress shirt.

"Techno's brother," Dream said pointedly.

"Gogy's lesser half," Ranboo shot back.

"Kill me," George said with a pained smile.

"Well you can't ask me to do it," Dream muttered bitterly. "*Gogy*," he taunted.

"I'm gonna kill myself," George declared.

Dream took a good look at George, also in somewhat of a brand new costume, gazing intensely at his face until George focuses and stared back at him, a twinkle of mischief from both of them. George was first to break eye contact though, shaking his head as he threw on a pair of tinted glasses before looking back at Dream. Oh, just how Dream hated how good he looked today.

"Let's go," George said nudged his head towards the very grey and discrete entrance of the building.

"Well now I feel underdressed," Dream joked sarcastically, falling into step next to George though he knew very well he should've been leading.

"You are underdressed bossman," Tubbo said, his shoulder bumping Dream's purposefully though it was more playful teasing. "Step up your game."

"Tubbo," Dream said slowly, testing out the slightly odd nickname on his tongue.

"Yep," Tubbo responded.

"Shut up," Dream replied and Tubbo gasped.

"Don't tell Tubbo to shut up, you bastard," Tommy replied though he was very quickly kept down by Ranboo's arm. Tubbo however only chuckled as they five approached the door.

"Turn your earpieces on," Dream commanded as they stepped inside the building. There were only a few grumblings of complaints though they followed his instructions well enough.

The bit of static gave a little comfort to Dream. Static meant there's at least some kind of connection to communicate with his team in the van, even if it's a little bad and not ideal. If you hear the high-pitched tone, however, that would mean the connection is completely cut off.

It was a bleak and grey hallway like most Herobrine facilities are. A little empty for how big the building actually was though that might be partially due to the fact that most of the building is set up for equipment and a satellite? Maybe? Dream isn't sure either. The point is they needed the land-space but not the people.

Herobrine has its own satellite, completely separate from the one operated by the Houston Space Center but even a blind person could see connections. They may not know exactly what the connections are, but they'll tell you it's there.

There's something ominous if not downright devious about something called Project Overworld that both involves a satellite and an absurd amount of weapons.

Dream knows the system isn't perfect and the government is corrupt, these are known things but he wasn't exactly expecting for it to be so far South that he would be teaming with known World-Class criminals on some mysterious take-down mission.

Of course, these criminals could absolutely be lying to him right to his fac-

"Hi," Dream instincts spoke faster than his brain could process, realizing that he was now in front of the secretary at the front desk. Secretary? Receptionist? Assistant? Dream's not quite sure.

"Oh hello," She cheerfully replied. "Can I help you with anything?"

"Yeah," Dream tapped nervously on the counter. "We're the uh- the-"

"New interns visitors group?" She offered.

"Yes, yes," Dream jumped on the statement. "We're here for the-"

"Tour?" Yet again, she completed the sentence.

"That's right," Dream chuckled nervously though he didn't have to turn around to know that George was rolling his eyes at him. "Could you maybe get us checked in?"

"Of course," She smiled delightfully. "If you could just sign your names, I'll get your passes right out."

Dream felt a bit weird, signing his own name amongst the fake names that came after him. Except for Tommy. Tommy signed as Tommy because the kid has guts not before seen in most people. Other than that it was Gregory, Raymond, and Theo. Like Dream said, a little weird. He was handing the list of names back to the woman when someone came into their particularly empty hallway.

"Awh!" A voice gasped from the end of the hallway. "My little duckling's home!"

Dream tensed up almost immediately, feeling the eyes of his four guests now turned at him in various levels of amusement. George was subtle, though a bit giggly, the other three were downright sniggering and choking in their laughter.

"Shut up before I make you the moving targets at the shooting range," Dream hissed before turning to the voice with the biggest smile he could muster. "Puffy!"

"How are you doing Dream?" Puffy shuffled down the hallway to pull Dream into a hug.

"I'm good, I'm good," Dream said, having his life choked out by his friend. "I'm here with the uh-"

"New interns tour," The assistant finished his sentence yet again.

"Oh Nina, Dream doesn't need a pass, he works here," Puffy told her assistant. "Just four visitors' cards for our guests, hello," She greeted cheerfully, offering her hand for a shake.

"Hi, it's a pleasure to meet you," George was quick to jump into action, flashing his million-dollar smile courteously at Puffy.

"Ooh, British," Puffy commented as she went down the line and shook everyone else's hand. "Didn't know we recruited internationally," She said with a little confusion, looking at Dream for an answer.

"New, that's the whole point," Dream chuckled. "We're trying new things, Galecki was thinking of a little new team outside of the country."

"Oh! That's kinda cool I guess," Puffy said. "So what's your background, uh-"

"Greg," George introduced himself. "I specialize in intel gathering."

"Intel gathering, that's interesting," Puffy said. "You sure you wanna be a field agent? I mean I'm guessing if Dream is the one to recruit you, you're somewhat be working field."

"Honestly, I'm not the most comfortable with field duty, I don't really like heights, and Lord knows I have such a hard time at the range," George said. "But I am willing to practice and get better!"

Liar, liar, liar. What a fucking liar. He's actually a sociopath. He's crazy, he's-

"Being on-field sounds a little less daunting when your mentor is Herobrine's best agent," George said. "Because I know someone will have my back."

Oh.

He should not have been that easily bought by a measly compliment that is also probably a lie, but he melted. Just a little bit. It was very annoying to deal with. How easily the words from George's mouth can buy his love is really annoying.

"I'm sure, I'm sure," Puffy laughed. "I taught him all he knows. He's a bit of a pain but he's very

good at what he does."

"Puffy," Dream exclaimed warningly.

"What? It's the truth," Puffy laughed before turning to the other three kids. "What about you guys? Shit, you guys are so young," She mumbled.

"We're not, we're-" Tommy started, as always, on his ramble but quickly stopped by Ranboo.

"-just starting out as soon as possible," Ranboo said. "Train 'em young to get their loyalty, right?" He chuckled.

"I like weapons," Tubbo smiled.

"Okay," Puffy mumbled in a mixture of amusement and slight discomfort, though mostly enjoying the weirdness coming from the new group. "Anyway, do you want me to come with you on the tour? I do, in fact, work here."

"No, no, I got it," Dream said easily. "I don't wanna make things difficult, I'm sure you're busy."

"No, I have time," Puffy assure him.

It was a bit of awkward silence.

"No, it's fine," Dream replied. "Please, we're taking up all your time, you've got work to do!"

"Yeah, and I'm trying to procrastinate, help me out here Dream," Puffy said jokingly and Dream chuckled. "Alright fine, I know when I'm not wanted," She said dramatically. "Come find me before you leave, okay? I wanna say goodbye."

"Yeah sure," Dream said, though his heartbeat was rising by the second and he was starting to regret a lot of his decisions.

"Alright then," Puffy said as Nina came back out with four keycards. "I'll leave you guys to it, it's been a pleasure to meet you guys."

Dream could only stare nervously as Puffy walked away back down the hallway and around the corner back to where he assumed her office would be stationed. He didn't even know he was holding his breath until George nudged him back to reality, he and the boys all collected their cards already.

"Tour?" George called.

"Right, yes, yes," Dream shook himself back to reality.

With a polite nod towards Nina, Dream led his group of 4 visitors down the hall and towards the elevator. It was silent, waiting for the elevator doors to open. When it finally did, the five went in, totally inconspicuous, and waited for the elevator door to close. And even then, inside the elevator all the way up to the third floor, they were silent. Cautious to make a move or make a sound, knowing there was a camera that may or may not pick up audio attached to the corner ceiling of the elevator.

With a little ding, the elevator door opened and they stepped out. And that's when they all started moving.

"Here's the hard drive," Ranboo told George, pulling the medium plastic case out of his bag.

Much to anyone's surprise really, turns out a lot of their outfits were pull-away clothes. Which was really weird to Dream but when it was revealed most of their clothing was solid black, it kind of makes sense.

"Keep your gun on you at all times, Ranboo you're the only one I trust with it," George said.

"That's hurtful George," Tubbo said jokingly.

"Okay we'll meet you outside when we're done," Tommy said, nudging Tubbo and Ranboo to follow him.

"Wait, wait," Dream called. "Where are you going?"

"You and George have business to take care of, we have our business to take care of," Tubbo said.

"You have a separate agenda?" Dream said.

"We most certainly have a separate agenda," Ranboo confirmed. "You can deal with Project Overworld on your own, we have more important things."

"Well you can't go alone anyway," Dream shook his head. "You can't get through the doors without my key card."

"Yes we can," Tubbo said. "We have our own keycard."

"You have guest keycards, you won't be able to-" Dream hadn't finished talking when Ranboo held up his key card to the closest door and it beeped open. Ranboo maintained eye contact with Dream as he turned the doorknob and swung the door open.

"Happy?" Ranboo asked. "We got this, just trust us."

"You have guest key cards, you won't have an all-access pass, you'll get stuck at some point and-" Dream was persistent to

"Oh my go-" Ranboo exclaimed, looking at George for help.

"Just trust them," George said exasperatedly. "They're not completely useless Dream, just trust them."

"Fine," Dream mumbled. "Careful not to get caught, especially by Puffy."

"We'll be fine duckling," Tommy rolled his eyes. "She's like 5'2," he chuckled. "What can she do?"

"Well she's the reason I'm still alive," Dream said. "Saved a bunch of people, stopped Eret's plans. But hey, she's only 5'2 right, like what can she do?" He added sarcastically.

"Okay," Tommy pursed his lips.

"We'll be careful," Ranboo assured them.

Dream was hesitant to leave the three kids alone to yet again roam the Herobrine facility on their own let alone not knowing what they are going to do. But he and George have their own fish to fry, and George was nudging him to get going. They're at a limit after all.

"You two, go!" Tubbo shoved Dream lightly, irritated at the whole waiting game. "Leave, we said we'd be careful."

"Meet you outside," George nodded, no longer wanting to wait for Dream's stubbornness and taking his wrist before tugging him down the hallway.

"You didn't tell me they had other things they needed to do," Dream said accusingly.

"Well they do," George brushed off. "They'll be fine."

"I don't trust you," Dream confessed.

"Yeah, I figured," George shrugged before knocking on the door at the end of the far East hallway.

Dream did now want to know how or why George knew exactly where to find the room with the supercomputer and the backup data storage system without having ever entered the building. Honestly, he didn't want to know how long they'd been planning this mission that the three kids had their own other agenda and Dream has only recently been roped into this. The voice on the other side of the door mumbled something that Dream didn't really hear but George did apparently because he swung the door open and entered the room.

"What are you doing?" George was the one asking the man working on his desk a question.

"What do you mean what am I doing," The man replied.

"Horace's been looking for you for like the last 20 minutes," George's voice was immediately urgent.

"Who's Horace?" The guy asked.

"Who's Horace? *Who's Horace?*" George exclaimed. "This guy just asked me who Horace is," He scoffed in disbelief at Dream. "Does Rhianna know you don't know who Horace is?"

"Wha- I'm-" The man stuttered, struggling to get out of his chair. "Who's Rhianna?"

"Who's Rhianna?" George exclaimed. "Puffy's gonna kill you."

"Wait, Puffy?" The man asked.

"Oh yeah, no," George said. "I'm telling her that I've already told you and if she gets mad it's on you, I don't wanna deal with that."

"Wait, no-" The man replied hurriedly. "I'm going, I'm going."

Dream stared in awe as the man bolted out of his office and down the hall, looking back only at a smugly smirking George.

Liar, liar, liar.

"Can't believe that worked," Dream said.

"I mean, you said Puffy was scary," George said. "Confuse them, then scare them. Works every time."

Dream looked mildly horrified at how terrifyingly manipulative his soulmate could potentially be. George was unbothered, walking into the database room. Dream shook himself out of the stun and followed suit. George sat down in the chair, immediately clicking around with the loading screen before typing things out in the command panel.

"Can your team hear me?" George asked though his eyes were fixated on the screen.

"Yep," Bad said over the earpiece. "We're ready for the receive."

"How long do we got?" Dream asked.

"I see your man in the elevator right now," Karl informed him. "Based on how much Puffy will take to realize something was wrong, I'll say 5 to 10 minutes."

"By that time you have 7 minutes to run to the car and drive away before the whole facility goes put on lockdown," Quackity said.

"Do we have a path?" Dream asked.

"I got you, buddy," Sapnap said. "I've cleared hallways, and made you a straight path to run through the back, I've moved your car from the parking lot too."

"Good, good," Dream muttered. "How much longer is the file transfer?"

"Are you reading the file transfer Bad?" George asked.

"It's receiving," Skeppy was the one who answered. "We're talking about entire servers and hundreds and thousands of files here. It'll take a while."

"We counted, it should be within 5-10 minutes," George said.

Dream knew very well who he was working with, but knowing that when George was saying 'we', he was referring to Wilbur and Eret made him want to convulse his entire body.

"Might need to make it faster," Karl informed them. "Your guy just got into Puffy's office."

"I can try to bounce it off the bigger satellite," Bad's words were followed by a series of intense keyboard clacking. "Might be faster than the one we're processing it through right now."

"That cut the time down to like 3 minutes," George said in amazement. "Nice one."

"Sapnap, Q, how're we doing right now?" Dream asked.

"Slow and steady, I've sent disruption to the cams in the hallways," Quackity said.

"And I'm sending a fake emergency to the guards at the gates, we should be ready to leave completely unseen," Sapnap said proudly.

"Two minutes," George said.

"Where are your kids?" Dream asked.

"We're fine," Ranboo said. "We're-"

That was immediately followed by a bunch of crashing and then Tommy yelling.

"Sorry," Tubbo muttered.

"We're fine, we'll be finished when you are," Ranboo answered.

"Your guy is out of Puffy's office, you have to go now," Karl said. "Oh god, and Puffy's going with him."

"She's what?" Dream exclaimed.

"Here," George said, handing him the hard drive. "Plug it in and it should start the destruction command."

Dream did as he was told. After all, that had been the plan all along. See, they could not have trusted Herobrine with anything big, therefore the need to destroy most if not all of their files. Then again, plans are not only in the database.

Deleting all their work will probably set them back a few months if not years, however, if the people who came up with it are determined enough, the plan could still be carried out. Whatever the hell that plan was. So, they needed to transfer the files to their own drives for safekeeping and for them to understand what it was really about. And also for a bargaining chip.

Fundy came up with the destruction command. Like a virus, straight from the drive to destroy whatever computer it was plugged into. And they were now standing in front of one of the smartest supercomputers on the planet, and they were going to destroy it.

"We're done," George declared. "100% transfer, run the command now."

Dream clicked on it and the screen went black. There were thousands of that familiar green glow from the line and lines of codes that flashed through the screen. It shut off for the littlest bit before a little text box popped up.

"Senior access code required?" Dream mumbled under his breath. "What?"

"Yeah," George said. "I guess so."

"I thought you said your guy has it all covered, just plug in the drive, no need for additional code or file that we need to steal," Dream said hurriedly.

"Because there isn't," George said. "We don't need to steal it, you have the access code."

"Wh- Mine?" Dream exclaimed. "You want me to use my access code?"

"We don't have a choice," George insisted.

"Yes, there was a choice," Dream pressed. "You could've told me the truth. You could've told me that you didn't have all the passcode, that way Bad or Karl could've tried-"

"There is no other way," George yelled. "I didn't lie. We have all the code, right now. You have your code. We can destroy the files, now."

"And put me in the spotlight!" Dream screamed back. "It's attached to my ID, to my name! What the fuck happened to anonymity? Why did we try so hard to snea-"

Dream watched the look on George's face turn from acting oblivious at the gravity of the situation into very obvious and numbing guilt.

"It was never about me was it?" Dream asked. "You just needed me for access so that you and Ranboo, and your little group can get into the facility, but you couldn't care less if I-"

George looked away.

Liar, liar, liar.

"If I got caught," Dream said venomously. "If my ID is now attached to the destruction command-"

"Dream, they're got into the elevator," Karl said.

"Dream, please," George begged. "We need them gone."

"It's my life for yours?" Dream laughed bitterly. "That's it isn't it?"

"No, no," George shook his head. "I'm sorry, I'm-"

Liar.

George didn't stop talking or apologizing, but Dream has stopped listening. His mind went into a high-pitched ringing and just a slate of white. Over such an unexpected betrayal, his heart broke and it physically ached him. The room got too cold, and in a daze, his hand mindlessly typing over the keyboard and entered his code.

A large red glowing text read 'DELETE ALL FILES PERMANENTLY' and Dream clicked the enter button. All the surrounding screens went dark. He could hear the whirring of fans trying their harders to cool the processors, as every single file the Herobrine supercomputer held got deleted.

"Dream, they're leaving the elevator now, you have to go, you have to go," Karl said urgently.

"Come on," George urged. "Come on, please."

George's hand barely touched Dream's shoulder before Dream harshly shook it off. He turned to George, stoic and silent, just his glare burning through the sniper with the fire of a thousand suns. George visibly gulped, slowly nodding before running out of the room.

"Dream," Sapnap's voice barked him out of his numbing rage. "Go, NOW!"

Dream let out a shaky breath before running out of the room, only to immediately run into Puffy and the guy who worked with the computers.

"Oh!" Puffy exclaimed. "Hey Dream."

Dream felt chills down his spine, goosebumps forming all over his skin. He gulped, feeling his chest get tighter and tighter as he looked down at Puffy. Guilt and fear, rising to his throat so much so that he felt it closing. His eyes darted at the guy who left Puffy's side and immediately heading back to his office. Dream knew he had seconds.

"Did you lose your tour group or something?" Puffy laughed.

Seconds, he has seconds.

"My duckling, what's wrong?" Puffy asked, her voice so obviously concerned when she saw Dream's face turn whiter than a sheet of paper. "What's wrong?"

"I'm sorry," Dream blurted. "Puffy you have to believe me, I'm so, so sorry."

"Wha-" Puffy shook her head. "What are you sorry for? What did you do?" Her questions were still a little lighthearted, a soft laugh on her part.

"Puffy, I'm really sorry-" Dream said. "I'm-"

"Captain, everything is gone!" A voice boomed from the end of the hallway. "The entire database is compromised, every single file is deleted."

"What?" Puffy gasped. It didn't take her too long to turn back to Dream.

"I'm so sorry," Dream said, starting to walk back and away from her. "Please, I'm so-"

"Dream," Puffy said more intensely, her hand catching Dream's wrist. "What did you do?" She asked darkly.

Dream felt like he was going to cry. To do something like this to the woman who saved his life. It wasn't so much so that it was a bad thing to do, he's had suspicions on Herobrine about the whole Project Overworld thing, rather that Puffy would think of him as the villain. Maybe it was fear as well, knowing now he is officially on the radar as a criminal. And he'll be damned if his friends are the ones assigned to take him down. He'd be damned if he had to fight the people who saved his life.

"I'm sorry," Dream said, shaking her grip off before bolting down the hall and the stairs.

Dream could still hear Puffy yelling and running after him though she was hardly equipped to run after him in her office casual clothes. He might not have been so lucky if she were in her training gear.

Down four flights of stairs, through a bunch of hallways- he couldn't even be bothered with navigating the cameras that are disrupted or not, he was exposed. He didn't even realize that his friends have been screaming at him through the comms, he was much too- dead. Like the crushing realization that every single joke made about doing illegal things for his soulmate came crashing

down and became true in a matter of seconds. He was not ready for this.

Out the back door, he immediately jumped into the back of his team's van. George's car had already taken off in front of him, the two cars speeding away from the facility at a speed that would probably kill them if they'd crashed. Dream was in such a daze that he didn't take notice that his friends were talking about what had just happened, what this means, but most importantly if he was okay.

The answer was no. He was not okay.

Not that he can pinpoint why, he already knew he was doing illegal things.

George. Maybe he *can* figure out why.

The same train of thought was running across his brain in such quick succession, looping endlessly and ruthlessly against his anxiety that he barely noticed when the van pulled to a stop. His team filed out of the van, down to the empty lot where they met up with not only the 4 that had infiltrated the facility with them but also greeted by the rest of the other team.

"You wanna show me the files?" Wilbur asked giddily as he pranced his way down towards the van. Bad solemnly nodded and started showing him what they'd found.

"Nice job fellas," Eret grinned lightly. "Honestly, I don't think that could've gone any better."

Dream felt sick, unable to hear another word coming from Eret and Wilbur without the risk of decking them straight in their teeth. Knowing his team probably has it handled, he walked away.

"Dream?" George's voice sounded like venom in his ears.

Go away. Go away.

His fists were clenched so tight that his knuckles turned white. Jaw shut so hard, his teeth grinding against each other. The ringing in his ear was getting so loud, his vision was hot. No, he can't do this right now.

"Dream," He called yet again,

Go away, go the fuck away.

"Clay-"

Liar.

"Don't ever fucking talk to me again," Dream snapped, not even turning to see George's face. He doesn't think he wants to anymore.

And with that, Dream walked away.

Chapter End Notes

angst pog? i hope that wasnt too bad but we gotta have some drama right ?

next update is going to be late, very late bcs snf week is in 2 weeks and I'm going to speedrun 7 fics

on that note, sub to user !! if you want to be updated every time i post a new work or update something

kudos and comments are super appreciated, i love them very much. thank you so much for the support

follow me on [twitter](#) ! i brainrot and interact with people and sometimes post snippets of upcoming works.

Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

haha hi long time to see ehehehe

anyway yall dont wanna be bothered with this note im sure you wanna read the rest of the chapter

I will be putting most of my focus on this fic and not participating/prioritizing fic weeks. Hopefully updates are more regulated

That is all from me, hope you enjoy this chapter !!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"So what's next?" Bad asked.

They were standing in a warehouse. It seems that lately, their entire lives seemed to revolve around going from warehouse to warehouse. This one isn't even one of their standard warehouse. The team didn't pick it, it obviously didn't come from Herobrine, I mean we all know how that went. The chances of them getting flagged the second that they use another Herobrine facility is ridiculously high, so yeah, they're hunkering down in an empty warehouse that George's team obtained and has very suspiciously withheld from the Herobrine team where they'd gotten it.

Honestly, it was getting a bit crowded. For an underground team trying to stop an alleged unspeakable evil, there were way too many people in that warehouse.

Let's do a headcount, shall we?

The Herobrine team, though they should probably stop calling themselves that, was a total of 6 people. It was Dream, Sapnap, Quackity, Skeppy, and Bad himself, with the additional Karl through their last-minute recruitment. The criminal team, who also probably needed a new name as well, was a whopping total of 8 people, with only a little less than half of them being minors. It was Eret, and Wilbur, George, Fundy, and Jack, and the three little pests.

That was a bit rude, Tubbo and Ranboo are pretty okay.

So that brings them up to 14 people.

A secret organization isn't really secret anymore if it goes up to the double digits.

"He's asking you two, dipshits," Sapnap snapped, glaring at Eret and Wilbur.

Things were understandably tense since the break-in that they orchestrated happened. The same break-in that didn't have that good of an ending.

"We're working on it," Wilbur was the one who replied, placing a hand on Fundy's shoulder as Fundy hunched over his laptop, trying his best to decipher whatever it was that George and Dream had retrieved.

"You said you knew what to do following this," Quackity had a little bite in his words.

"We do know what to do," Wilbur said. "It's just taking a little bit of time is all."

Dream and his team were sitting on the thinnest last bit of patience. See, they don't have the calmness of Tubbo sitting at a corner, softly strumming his ukelele, or Tommy on his phone hanging upside down off the sofa, or Ranboo, who was sitting next to him, casually talking to Tubbo in low voices. Even Jack was sitting cross-legged on the floor close to them just hanging.

It's completely unfair that half of their team gets to be blatantly ignorant while their entire team is slowly clawing themselves out of pure anxiety. But here they were, staring at a completely useless Wilbur, Eret, Fundy, and George.

"You're kidding right?" Quackity asked accusingly after a few more minutes of waiting. "Do you want Karl or Bad to take over because you're so completely useless?"

"Watch it," Eret said warningly.

"Oh I know you're not talking, buddy," Sapnap chuckled darkly.

"What is that supposed to mean?" Eret asked back.

"It means that you've basically doomed us," Sapnap said. "You talk, all high and mighty like you know what to do, how to do it, and you're one step ahead of everyone's plan. You talk about this impending doom coming from Herobrine that essentially just stems from your daddy issues, and now- you're sat there with your dick in your hand because you also don't know what to do."

That escalated far too quickly.

"Sapnap," Bad said warningly, placing a hand on Sapnap's chest to push him back.

"Don't say shit about me or my father you twit, you're lucky I let you live," Eret growled.

"Oh let me? You *let* me live?" Sapnap scoffed. "I got out of that mineshaft. Me. I did that."

"Still bitter, are we?" Eret drawled.

"I will deck that smile off your face," Sapnap said, though there was a hand on his shoulder far too quickly. Bad shook his head and pulled him back. "I will do it."

"Just let us get out expert," Skeppy said.

"You're talking about *kidnapping* your expert," Fundy said. "I can do this, alright?"

"Kidna-" Skeppy sputtered. "You guys of all people shouldn't be against kidnapping someone!"

"Yeah when we're the one who does it," Wilbur said. "I don't trust you lot to steal a candy from a baby."

"Well I don't trust you on just about anything right now, so how bout we pick things up and try something else?" Quackity spat.

The tension in the room is palpable. It always is when it comes to all of these people. No one likes

anyone, no one trusts anyone, it's a miracle that any of them ever get anything done.

Fundy was still typing away on his computer when there's a loud beep from the computer. He threw his hands up and groaned, falling back onto the chair as Eret, Wilbur, and George sighed, knowing full well the absolute lectures they are going to get from the other half of the room staring at them.

But before another word could be uttered, Dream stood up from his seat harshly that his chair slid back against the floor. Karl tried to whisper to him, asking what was wrong but Quackity simply shook his head. Dream walked away without a single explanation, though most of those answers could easily be inferred.

"Kay, you absolute failures-" Sapnap spat. "Let Karl on the computer or I will start shooting."

"Fine, go-" Fundy muttered.

Fundy stood up from his seat to let Karl get on his chair and maybe attempt to figure out whatever it was that was still blocking them. Sapnap gave Karl a soft nudge, Karl smiling timidly before taking Fundy's seat.

"Careful with my-" Fundy told Karl, though Bad shot him a look that quickly shut him up. "-set up," He mumbled the last part.

Bad rolled his eyes and went to Karl's side to assist in any way that he could.

Dream was gone, and even though Sapnap and Bad may want to talk to him, and tell him everything is going to be okay, and that things will be for the greater good, they knew better than to bother him in times of great stress.

Unfortunately, there are people who don't know about this little fact, and well, Ranboo, Tubbo, and Tommy were three of them.

Dream tucked himself away on the roof of the warehouse, sitting down with his back to the corner of the roof. He didn't like heights, but he needed the fresh air and the roof seemed like the better choice rather than walking about on the street when you're a highly wanted man.

He was also craving some peace when the door to the roof flew open and the three musketeers filtered inwards. They were talking, laughing, and they were loud. And Dream didn't really have the patience to deal with them in a shared space, so he did what he had to do.

"Leave, please," Dream was tired, but he wasn't a dick. He can still say please and thank you.

"Oh, but it's so stuffy down there," Tubbo complained. "Surely you can spare some fresh air bossman."

"I just need some quiet," Dream said. "If you guys can be quiet, the air's all yours."

"Yeah, of course, man," Ranboo smiled. "We can be quiet."

That was a complete and blatant lie.

It wasn't as if the three kids even tried to go sit on the other side of the rooftop or try to keep the talking to a minimum. Dream suspected that them going up to the roof wasn't because of the stuffy warehouse or needed fresh air. Not when the three of them sat not too far away from him, talking in huddles.

Dream kept patient and kept his eyes closed, inhaling and exhaling slowly trying to calm himself. Meanwhile, the talking, mumbling, whispering in his ears doesn't stop. He could hear Ranboo telling Tommy to stop in a hushed voice then which ultimately failed.

"Hey green boy," Tommy called.

Dream does not know where the nickname came from not why it stuck, and at this moment he gravely despised it. He didn't open his eyes, no he absolutely refused to. But even with his eyes closed he could feel the three pairs of eyes searing their gazes through his skin.

"You said you'd be quiet," Dream mumbled, adamant to keep his eyes closed.

"Well I-" Tommy muttered softly. "I just-"

The loudest of the bunch was quiet and that bit was a little unnerving for Dream. He opened one eye and peeked over, watching their faces looking at him nervously.

"What do you want?" Dream sighed.

There was a bit of whispering shared between them as they made up their collective mind to talk to Dream.

"You worked with Techno, right?" Ranboo asked.

"Yes," Dream answered curtly. "I thought you'd know that by now, Techno's your brother after all."

"Yeah," Ranboo gulped.

"So what can you tell us about Phil?" Tubbo blurted out.

Dream's entire body stiffened. He shifted uncomfortably, sitting up straighter as he finally opened his eyes, looking the three boys in the eyes.

"Phil?" Dream asked and the three of them nodded. "Why- why do you- I mean, why-"

"Well he's my-" Tommy stopped. "He's our Phil."

"I think Techno would know more about Phil and I do," Dream muttered.

"Well Techno doesn't like talking about Phil," Ranboo said. "Makes him angry."

"Doesn't like to admit it, but I reckon he misses him," Tubbo said.

"Right," Dream smiled sadly. "How long has it been?"

"Five?" Tommy offered. "Maybe six years?"

"It's been a while, I guess huh?" Dream muttered.

"And Wilbur won't talk about him either," Tommy started to rant. "He get's super upset about it."

"Why would Wilbur-" Dream questioned. "I didn't think Wilbur knew Phil like that."

"Oh," Tubbo broke into a sneaky little grin. "You don't know, do you?"

"Apparently not," Dream said. "Don't know what, exactly?"

"Well," Tommy said. "Phil's our dad."

"Who's *our*?" Dream asked.

"Me and Wil, of course," Tommy scoffed like it was the most obvious thing in the world.

"Of course," Dream mumbled. "Right."

"I still never knew what happened," Tommy said. "What happened to Phil, I mean."

"He got caught," Dream said solemnly. "I guess he was- I guess he was trying to bail out his son," He chuckled, though, for the first time ever it doesn't sound malicious. "It was a complete shock to everyone, you know? No one ever expected him to be working with the bad guys. But I guess it's clear why now."

"He never helped Wilbur," Tubbo muttered.

"Sorry?" Dream questioned.

"He never-" Tubbo looked up to Ranboo and Tommy for assistance and confirmation. "Phil never worked or helped Wilbur."

"Yeah he did," Dream said. "It was an art heist. Wilbur was trying to break into the Louvre, and he was about to get caught when he got away with a random Herobrine car. A car that Phil purposefully left unattended for him."

"Philza Minecraft isn't that stupid," Tommy shook his head. "Phil didn't let me see Wil for years because of what he was doing with Eret, I don't think he'd be the one to leave Wil a car."

Dream frowned, his brows furrowed. He thought about the events of that night. How it had been one of his first mission abroad, how he'd shared a room with Techno on their trip that Sapnap didn't go to. How Phil had even treated him out to dinner that night.

It was one slip up. Apparently, Phil left a set of keys in the car and allowed Wilbur to steal the car and run away from the rest of them.

But then things started popping up. Phil was sneaking paintings from the evidence lockers, he was forging documents, helping people funnel money through Herobrine. Suddenly all of these things were popping up and it was easy to accuse the man who let the criminal who had not only stole 4 Jacques-Louis David's paintings, but also two whole Michaelangelo marble sculptures, you know, the really really heavy ones, and made the entire Herobrine department look like absolute idiots.

And Phil was essentially crucified for it.

Dream remembered Techno's protests, about how Phil would never be so stupid as to forget a set of keys, let alone purposefully leave it. Techno dove through all the paperwork obsessively, finding and pointing out inaccuracies and discrepancies against all of the accusations on Phil's history.

None of that mattered though, because one morning, Phil just disappeared.

"I don't know," Dream admitted after a long string of silence. "I don't know what happened either."

"Well, what do you know about Phil anyway?" Tubbo asked. "I remember that he used to let me play with Wil's old guitar when I sleepover at Tommy's."

"He feeds birds at the park on Sundays like an old man," Tommy smiled. "He's old."

"He's one of the best shots in his class," Dream said. "He's not that old."

"He had those old people candy in his car though," Ranboo said. "I used to steal them from his cupholder every time he picks me and Techno up to drop me and Tommy to school before doing to work."

"I didn't know Techno carpooled with Phil," Dream laughed. "Really? That's nice."

"He was cool right?" Tommy asked expectantly. "Phil was- He was good at what he does."

"Yeah," Dream told them kindly. "He's the one that taught me how to fly."

"Fly?" Tubbo's eyes lit up instantly. "You know how to fly?"

"Yeah. Well, a fighter jet specifically, but how different could everything else be?" Dream nodded. "Phil's a fantastic pilot and an even better teacher. He taught me tricks and everything on the plane."

"Is that part of the Herobrine training? Can everyone fly planes?" Ranboo asked excitedly.

"Optional," Dream told him. "I just happen to want to do it and Phil was more than happy to teach me."

Tommy smiled, along with Tubbo and Ranboo who patiently shared his little bit of excitement. There was a tinge of sadness in the air that Dream quickly felt following the bit of silence.

"You miss him, huh?" Dream asked.

"Six years is a long time," Tommy answered. "He just left me."

"Yeah," Dream mumbled pitifully. "I'm sorry for that. I really am. Phil didn't deserve it, and you certainly didn't."

"It's alright," Tommy said bravely. "Hanging out with Wilbur's been fun. He takes me everywhere."

"You mean he takes you around to steal things," Dream rolled his eyes.

"He taught me history when we did the monarch heists, actually," Tommy snarked. "Thank you very much."

"And what about you?" Dream looked at Tubbo. "Wil took Tommy after Phil left, Ranboo from Techno, and where did you come from Tubbo?"

"I was just always around," Tubbo shrugged. "Where Tommy and Ranboo goes, I go."

"And your family?" Dream asked.

"Who cares anymore," Tubbo shrugged. "Not like they ever cared about me."

Dream's mouth felt dry, like he wanted to say something about this whole situation but failed miserably. Three kids, and emphasis on *kids*, were sitting in front of him. Sure they're probably very well protected and cared for. Wilbur, Techno, and everyone else seemed to be very protective of them, but it's not missed to Dream that their childhoods were taken away from them. You could argue that they have fun, no parents, no school, flying around the world like the absolute menaces they are. But still, Dream knew they were missing a few things.

Ever since they were kids, they were thrown into a life of running and being chased. Dream

wondered if they were ever curious about what prom is like, or if they've gone on an ice cream date with someone they liked in the 8th grade. Probably not, but these children had most definitely held the world's most expensive artworks and jewelry for sure.

"So," Ranboo drawled slowly. "About George-

"Oh come on," Dream groaned. "You guys were doing so well!"

"We're just curious!" Ranboo exclaimed defensively.

Dream wanted to yell and scream and be absolutely angry at the whole situation, but part of him wouldn't let that happen, and instead, he chuckled. That much answered his questions. Living with Wilbur, Eret, and Techno must be somewhat difficult. They probably were too engrossed with their work and trying to keep them safe that they had no time for little talks.

"He shot you," Tubbo said.

"Yes," Dream answered curtly.

"What did that feel like?" Tommy asked. "It didn't- Like it wouldn't have hurt you."

"Like getting a needle injection," Dream replied. "They still hurt, sort of. It's just not as impactful."

"Do you feel anything else?" Ranboo asked. "Isn't it weird? Like, you're supposed to feel things with your soulmate, about your soulmate. The universe said no and instead, you feel nothing."

"Physically," Dream said. "And only for things that will fatally harm you. Other than that, I'm pretty sure it's fairground."

"So," Tubbo pursed his lips. "If you want to punch George right now-

"Oh you don't want to give me ideas kid," Dream stopped him immediately with a little chuckle.

"But you're soulmates," Tommy said. "Aren't you meant to be together?"

"The rules just state that I can't be the one that kills him," Dream said. "Never anything about being together."

"But you don't mean that," Ranboo said. "Right?"

Dream was surprised at himself just at how willing he was to answer all of these questions. Questions that in another time, had it come from any other people, he would've shot down way too quickly. Actually, he was pretty surprised that he even answered them knowing they came from the three little rats that put him in the hospital.

"I don't know," Dream responded. "It's more complicated than that, and I don't have the answers."

Tubbo was about to open his mouth about another thing to bombard Dream about, the door to the roof opened and Bad stepped into view.

"We are talking about a plan," Bad said awkwardly. "If you wanna hear about it?"

Dream gave him a strained and weak smile, before standing up from his comfortable place on the rooftop floor. He looked down at the three kids surrounding him and rolled his eyes.

"If I'm going, then you have to go too," Dream muttered, receiving a series of groans.

Still, there was a little smile on Dream's face when he walked towards Bad, following him down the stairs, knowing that he was followed by three other people.

His slightly better mood was instantly ruined the second he laid his eyes on a particular sniper. This tends to happen a lot lately, and it's honestly starting to become a problem.

"What?" Dream said the moment he arrived.

"We failed," Karl confessed.

"No, you tried your best," Sapnap corrected. "*They* failed."

Dream could see the eye roll coming from Wilbur and Eret, though neither of them could really object since it was ultimately the truth. Dream sighed, crossing his arm and tapping his foot on the ground much like an impatient grade school teacher.

"Alright, so what's next?" Dream demanded.

"Well we talked about this," Skeppy said. "I think we should get Ponk."

"Wait," Eret interjected. "Ponk?"

"Yeah?" Bad mumbled. "He's a professor at Sam-"

"-Houston State University," Wilbur finished. "We're well aware."

"So you know Ponk?" Quackity asked.

"We're-" George piped up quietly. "We're friends."

"How are you guys friends?" Sapnap scoffed incredulously. "You tried to kill Sam. You know, they were boyfriends or whatever."

"Well you know-" Eret waved her hand calmly. "A friend of my friend is an enemy. Or something like that," She shrugged.

"That's not- That's not how it works," Karl sighed softly under his breath.

"Hell you should've told us it was Ponk, we could've done this hours ago," Wilbur grinned.

"Right, because now it's super easy," Dream snarked lowly. "I'll go get Ponk," He declared.

"Well you can't go alone," Fundy piped up.

"And why not?" Dream questioned.

"That's just not smart man," Fundy told him. "You have cameras after you, if you get ambushed, that's it for you. One of us should go with you."

"Why one of you?" Dream muttered with a disgusted look on his face that felt very much personal. "I'll just bring Sapnap."

"You're gonna need someone who'll get you out and get you home," Wilbur said. "Your team isn't capable of committing crimes, you'll get skewered."

"If Ponk's your friend, we wouldn't have to kidnap him," Sapnap said. "We could just go to him and escort him here."

"He's our friend," George said. "Last I checked, he hated you guys. Broke up with his soulmate over it."

"Shut your muffin, Sam's his soulmate?" Bad gasped only for Skeppy to quickly smack his shoulder to shut him up.

"He's our friend, not yours, so it makes sense if one of us goes with you," Eret said.

"I'll take the kids," Dream nudged his head back at Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo. "Hell, I'll take all three of them."

"You're not taking my kids," Wilbur said. "George can go. He's good friends with Ponk."

"If he's going, I'm not going," Dream said curtly.

"Dream-" Wilbur attempted to get a second word out but Dream raised his hands and walked away just like he did not even an hour ago.

"C'mon, Dream-" Eret tried to call out.

"You've made your choice," Dream replied simply, not giving them a second look. "Go take Sapnap or Bad."

George inhaled sharply, his jaw clenched tight. It was a confusing mixture of emotions. Part of him felt that guilt rising from the depths of his stomach all the way to the clench in his heart. It was painful, and he knew that he deserved all that anger and coldness. But part of him was just annoyed. Like classically annoyed. Anyone would be annoyed if it were a situation of being blown off very rudely, but also he was kinda annoyed at himself for feeling that way because he deserved it.

It was confusing, and it tipped him just over the line.

George jogged after Dream, none of the voices that called out to him or tried to stop him were registering. His mind was focused on one man and that man was once again on the roof. For a guy who was scared of heights, Dream sure went to the roof a lot.

"Hey," George barked a little too harshly. "The least you can do is be professional."

The scoff that came from the depths of Dream's throat was cold and dead, his eyes piercing as he looked over at George with a hatred that almost looked impossibly hot.

"Funny," Dream commented.

"We have the same goal, do we not?" George said. "We need to stop Herobrine, we need to-"

"And we can do just that," Dream said simply. "I just don't have to do it next to you."

"What is your problem?" George exclaimed. "I did what I had to do to get the job done, you would've done the same thing."

"No," Dream yelled defensively. "I wouldn't have."

"It's for the better of the world," George told him.

"You framed me," Dream spat. "You *framed* me."

"I wasn't trying to!" George confessed. "But we needed those files destroyed and we couldn't do it so you had to-"

"I'm running on full blind faith, you know that right?" Dream asked, his tone accusatory. "Every single government intelligence unit, CIA, FBI, Interpol, MI6? They all work with Herobrine. I am flagged as a criminal, I am never allowed to work again."

"Herobrine is bad people," George told him.

"I don't know that!" Dream screamed. "You never tell me anything, and I'm just supposed to trust you? How do I know if you have proper judgment, you're a murderer!"

"That's not fair," George took a step back.

"What's not fair is you telling me that I would've done the same thing to you," Dream's voice is strained. "I got into this mess because of you, I've given up everything for your sake. To trust your judgment, to believe that regardless of your past, you're not wrong now. I've broken so many laws and policies to protect you, to hide evidence against you, to corrupt all the files Herobrine has against you-"

"You what?" George gasped.

Dream stopped his furious rampage, seemingly caught saying something he shouldn't have. George

stepped back, his heart beating faster with each passing second. Dream inhaled and exhaled hard, his lungs rising and falling to catch his breath from all the yelling he's done. But still, the cold air of the night doesn't help with the shortness of breath.

How? How was he supposed to tell his soulmate that he'd destroyed all incriminating records that could and would have incarcerated George mere weeks after he's found of his secret identity? How was he supposed to tell George that the casino isn't the first thing he's done outside of the law for George's sake, that he'd had Karl protect and hide all evidence pointing to George for weeks now?

How was he supposed to tell George, his soulmate, the one who at that rooftop in Vegas told him that he wanted nothing to do with Dream, that from the second he'd given Sapnap and Bad his name, they were immediately able to find him? His family, mother, father, sisters, and a cat, but also a little dog. All of which Dream immediately shut down.

Though the same courtesy won't be extended to Dream when Herobrine agents kick his mother's door down in an attempt to find him.

"I never asked you to," George mumbled quietly.

"You never had to," Dream replied. "I didn't even have to believe you at the time, but I also didn't want to risk sending Herobrine agents to King's College's dorm rooms, or worse, show up to H.B. Beal Secondary School."

Dream watched as George's eyes flickered. He could only imagine the last time George talked to his sisters or if he even knew where they went to school. If George knew that his parents were country club members that played golf every other week, or if his sister had a violin solo for the Christmas recital, and the other one is on track to graduate in Arts, summa cum laude.

It wasn't very hard to find them, and that much was frightening.

"I'm sorry," George said after swallowing the largest lump in his throat. He didn't even know when his voice started cracking.

This was the first time George even apologized. All this time since the break-in happened, George never even once apologized. It was always a string of *it's for the good of the people*, or *we did what we had to do*, or some bullshit that sounded like it was probably strung up by Eret or Wilbur. This was the first time George apologized, and Dream wished he cared enough to figure out if it was

sincere or not.

"I wanted so hard to forgive you," Dream said slowly. "Do you know how hard it is? To want to forgive someone you're not even sure deserves forgiveness?"

George's lips were apart, wanting so badly to speak, to apologize even more, even further if that's even possible, though his voice wouldn't let him. He felt weak, not only because he felt like his entire body is collapsing underneath him, but also because all he wanted to do right at this moment was cry. He just wanted to cry his heart and eyes out, and he'd never felt weaker.

World Class Snipers don't cry.

"Now, I just don't care," Dream's little smile on his face was brutal and gutwrenching if George ever knew what it felt like. "Just go get Ponk."

George nodded slowly, unable to say another word. There were about a thousand things he wanted to say, a thousand more that he should've said, but all those were replaced by the empty action of walking away and leaving Dream alone to bask under the moonlight.

It would be a bald-faced lie if Dream were to say that he was okay. He most certainly was not. He was tough, he was the one fueled with unbridled anger, and at this point, in this interaction, he was the one who set up the walls and boundaries, but it would be a lie to say that it didn't hurt him to do so.

Ever since that first day, that first time that Dream worked with George and he's proceeded to protect him and save him and his team's life, Dream was slowly starting to make peace with the thought of running away. He was a good guy, Dream wouldn't go straight to committing crimes, but he was ready to bend the laws and retire his career for a cabin in the woods and working at a hardware store.

He thought, quite romantically and a little bit idiotically, if he couldn't have his life than at least he'd have his love.

And now he has neither.

The minutes turned into hours, and the night ticked on until the sun started to rise, and Dream was

still on that rooftop. He recalled Sapnap jokingly offering to bring him a sleeping bag or a hammock, and part of Dream regretted not taking it. The other part knew that it didn't matter as he stayed awake through the night anyway, so what was the point?

It was at the brink of dawn when the sun started streaming into his eyes that he finally got up and walked back down to the common area of the warehouse. He didn't even feel tired that was the weirdest part. He must've fallen asleep at some point, he thought, though the night felt like a weird slow fog in his brain, so he couldn't really tell for sure.

Dream walked down and made his way to the kitchen, meeting Bad who was often the first one up out of everyone under that room. The coffee fumes didn't even bother him that much, Dream just sat quietly on the table, letting Bad ramble off his ear cheerfully as Bad tried to prepare breakfast for him.

It's a bit pathetic, actually, the way Dream was acting, walking around in a numb daze. But he didn't really care, and thankfully his friends didn't either.

"So I called Sam," Bad said. "It's okay though, he didn't really know that me and Skeppy were involved with the break-in, and I asked him about Ponk. And he got super defensive about it. Like, you know how Sam is? And I asked him, how could you be so stupid as to let your soulmate break up with you? And he was saying something like it was a mutual decision and that-"

"Bad?" Dream called, gently tapping his plate with a fork to make a little clinking noise.

"Yes?" Bad replied. "Do you want more eggs?"

"No, no, I'm-" Dream said. "Look, I appreciate you trying to distract me, and it's a wonderful breakfast, but I don't need to be hearing about Sam who Puffy probably called about me breaking in, and also his love problems with his soulmate."

"Oh," Bad's voice was timid. "I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, I didn't realize."

"It's okay," Dream chuckled. "Thank you, though. You always make the best omelettes."

"No problem," Bad chirped happily. "Sapnap's the one leaving to get Ponk today, in case you wanted to know. I think after you, Sapnap probably knows him best."

"Sapnap's gonna do well," Dream said. "Hopefully we get somewhere."

Dream left a bit after the kids joined him at the table. Sure, they were kind of delightful in a very annoying little brother kind of way, but Dream isn't about to volunteer to bring spend time with them if he wasn't really in the mood. So while Bad was cooking them breakfast, which was much appreciated since these kids probably haven't had homemade food in about a few years, Dream snuck out back.

One upside that Dream could think about through all this was the weapons. Techno's weapons to be exact. Dream spent a lot of time trying out his new designs and getting comfortable with them since now that he's working with the rest of them, he's allowed to have access to these weapons.

He enjoyed every second that he had to spend shooting things and destroying, a perfect outlet for his anger at this point, but also he enjoyed figuring the new weapons out. It seems wrong to admit that maybe Techno was better off quitting Herobrine.

It was a lot of target practice, something that is purposefully designed to ward off unwanted people and unwanted conversation. But somehow it didn't stop people from trying to disturb his shooting time.

"No, you ask him," Tubbo whispered.

"Me?" Ranboo exclaimed. "Why do I have to ask him?"

"He likes you best," Tubbo said. "He used to be friends with Techno remember?"

"Past tense, past tense," Ranboo insisted. "Tommy you do it."

"What? Why?" Tommy yelled.

"Because Wilbur asked, and it's from Wilbur, so you should ask by extension," Ranboo reasoned.

"Well that's a load of bullshit," Tommy muttered.

Dream rolled his eyes at the voices that somehow managed to penetrate through the hearing protection.

"Out with it," Dream cut off their bickering, putting Techno's sonic gun version 2.3 on the ground, before pulling one ear of the protection. "What do you want?"

"Uh-" The three of them froze.

"I don't bite," Dream sighed exhaustedly. "What is it?"

"Well," Tubbo began. "The people were wondering if-"

"Yes?" Dream urged impatiently.

"Maybe if you know-" Tommy continued pointlessly.

"C'mon, you guys," Dream rolled his eyes.

"Where George went?" Ranboo completed the sentence.

"He went with Sapnap to see Ponk, no?" Dream muttered like it was the most obvious thing in the world. It wasn't.

"No," Tommy said. "Your friend is still inside, he didn't leave yet because we can't find George."

Dream slowed down, slowly taking his gloves off of his hands, his face scrunched up in confusion. He kept quiet though started walking, making his way back into the warehouse, the three kids trailing behind him. Dream was met with the rest of the group talking in a circle, looking particularly distressing and confused.

"What's this all about?" Dream asked.

"We can't find George," Jack was the first one to reply.

"Okay," Dream mumbled. "Another one of you go with Sarnap then, I don't see why you had to send them to ask me."

"That's not the only problem," Skeppy told Dream.

"I went on the set up this morning to see if I can mess around," Karl continued without being prompted. "The files are gone. Like all of them are gone."

"And I looked it over, and it was George's ID last logged in," Fundy told him.

"Plus, they found this," Quackity said, holding out a little earpiece. "And it wasn't the one they're supposed to give Sarnap."

"Alright," Dream mumbled. "Summarize," He requested.

"George left his earpiece and he took all the files," Wilbur said. "Without the earpiece, we can't track him down."

"Or maybe he didn't want to be tracked down," Sarnap sneered. "Is that what this is? He stole the files and bolted."

"George wouldn't do that," Tommy piped up.

"He's done that before," Bad mumbled softly. "Hasn't he?"

"Maybe he doesn't want them to track us," Eret stated. "If they caught him, they could reverse the tracking on the earpiece and come to us," They said, staring at Sarnap pointedly.

"But where would he go?" Ranboo asked. "What was the point?"

"I don't know," Wilbur shrugged. "He didn't only take our files, he took yours too."

"Ours?" Tubbo asked. "You mean the files that we- the ones that *we* stole? Not only theirs?" He gestured to himself and then Dream.

Dream vaguely remembered the separate agenda and the side mission that Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo conducted when they were in the Houston facility. The side mission that he helped them get away completely unseen.

"Wait, wait," Dream shook his head. "Them, who's them?"

"What?" Bad asked.

"She said *them*," Dream pointed to Eret. "*George didn't want them to track us*, who's them?"

Eret sighed, his jaw clenched as he realized that not everyone is up to speed with his suspicions and theories on what probably happening. And especially not Dream.

"Herobrine," Wilbur was the one who replied. "I asked you where George went because I think you asked him to give you the files back for your sake."

"Wh-why-" Dream stuttered. "I never asked him. I didn't ask him. Why would he do that?"

"Well," Eret shrugged. "Love makes us do idiotic things, don't they?"

George left in the middle of the night.

Granted it was probably a stupid move, and he could've thought more of it through, but he didn't.

Within an hour after everyone fell asleep, he snuck onto Fundy's set up and look the files.

He felt a little stupid getting dropped off by an Uber in the middle of nowhere at butt fuck 4 AM. The driver probably thought that he's going to a booty call, though the location of it didn't quite make sense.

It was an abandoned pawnshop in the middle of a series of shops on it's way to being torn down in place of a new shopping district. To say that it looked sketchy with the wooden boarded up windows and the old dusty signs was very much an understatement, though the circumstances of the meet up made it quite appropriate.

There were a lot of things that George could've and should've done to protect himself, a number of weapons he could have stashed in his boot, his back, his hands. He should've brought a gun. But he came as a sign of peace, and it should probably remain that way.

The door creaked a little too loud as he entered the premises and though he's taken lives before and done heinous things worse than what a commoner would even think about doing, he'd be lying if he'd told you that his heart wasn't beating super fast or that his hands weren't clammy.

"Hands where I can see them or I shoot," A vaguely familiar voice called out from the dark.

George stopped in his spot, raising his hand slowly up into the air and over his head. Can't say that he doesn't know how, this isn't the first time he's been held at gunpoint.

"Turn around," The voice instructed.

George did as he was told, slowly stepping until he was face to face with the figure that had a gun pointed at him. It was hard to see, he could only make out the outline of her body from the light pouring in through the door, coming from the streetlights outside.

"Puffy, right?" George started nervously.

"What do you want?" Puffy said. "How did you even get my number? What did you- Where's Dream?"

"Dream isn't here," George said. "This is about him, but I don't really want him involved."

"You can't call me at 2 AM in the morning and tell me you have something that you need to tell me about Dream and just-" Puffy rambled on. "He did something bad. He did something horrible. Dream helped you break into our facility and destroy all our files. Stole them and ran away."

"He didn't have a choice," George said. "You have to believe me, it's not his fault."

"How is it not his fault?" Puffy demanded. "It was his security ID pressed in. No one else had access to it. It wasn't an accident, it was intentional self-destruction."

"I know, I know," George exclaimed. "I get it, but you just- He didn't mean to. He didn't know that he would have to do it. I tricked him."

"You *tricked* him," Puffy said incredulously. "One of the best agents Herobrine has ever seen walk their halls and you just tricked him? What did you tell him to play a crossword puzzle and one of the answers was his code?"

"It's not like that," George pleaded. "Puffy, you have to believe me," He said again."

"You?" Puffy questioned. "I don't even know you."

"Look," George said, slowly taking a few steps forward. Puffy raised her gun ever further in retaliation. "Dream is a good guy. You know this, I know this."

"And he betrayed us," Puffy said furiously. "He betrayed me."

"Because I asked him to," George told her. "I made him choose, and he made the wrong decision," Puffy stayed silent and continued to stare at him. "He picked me over himself."

"Well he *made* his decision," Puffy scoffed.

"Because I'm his soulmate, okay?" George confessed, and he watched as Puffy physically recoiled.

"And I shouldn't have made him. And he doesn't deserve whatever it is you have on him. The police, the agents, the arrest warrant, that all should be for me, I'm-

"404."

If Puffy's gun made his body stiffen up, this voice alone made his entire being freeze up. This one wasn't only vaguely familiar, it was too familiar though every single second that he didn't have to hear that voice, he would forever be grateful.

"So your reputation upholds then," Mr. J snarled. "You didn't miss the shot."

George's heart dropped to the pit of his stomach, jaw instantly clenched tight, teeth grinding against each other. His nails were digging into the skin of his palms, unsure if it's out of fear or something else.

"You actually hit him," Mr. J cackled. "It just-" He made a little whooshing sound. "-went straight through his body."

"Mr. J," George greeted lowly, though his eyes were trained still on Puffy.

It's become very clear the meet-up that George had requested to clear Dream's name was a lot closer to an ambush. There were people waiting outside in the abandoned street, an extra two-three cars rolled closer to the front of the building.

He should've been smarter, but love makes you stupid things, don't they?

"So that explains what happened at Billington Tower," Mr. J hummed. "But that doesn't explain what happened afterward," He muttered in fake confusion. "See Johansen swore that he saw you. Best shot the streets have ever seen, it wasn't hard to identify who was shooting my people down and helping defected Herobrine agents escape."

"*Defected Herobrine agents*," George repeated slowly, his eyes still trained on Puffy.

"Explain to me that 404," Mr. J said. "Explain to me why you did something that breached our

contract. Me!" He laughed. "Are you not scared of me, 404?" He pouted.

"I'll answer you when you explain why you're working with Herobrine," George said smoothly thought most of his question was directed towards Puffy.

Puffy's eyes flickered hesitantly, her eyes shifting back and forth between George and Mr. J who was slowly stepping out of the shadow from behind him.

George could see the little hesitation from the furrowed look on Puffy's face, telling her that something isn't quite right. Though George could only hope for so much help from someone who only knew him as the guy that broke her little duckling.

"We have what you would call-" Mr. J pondered dramatically. "A very unique and special partnership."

"Of course you do," George said with a bit of bite in his words.

"Well that's my explanation," Mr. J said. "Where's yours?"

Mr. J was now standing in front of George, his face carrying an unhinged smile as he stared deep into George's eyes.

"No?" Mr. J questioned. "No problem, I do think I know your explanation. It's quite romantic actually. I just have to find him and maybe-"

"Don't you fucking dare touch him," George muttered darkly. George surged forward but the cold barrel of Mr. J's handgun pressed against his chest too quickly.

"Ah, ah, ah," Mr. J tutted, digging the gun deeper against George's body. "That's no way to treat your employer."

"You haven't paid me, you fucker," George was at the last bit of his patience. "All is null and void, isn't it?"

"Awh, come on now," Mr. J said playfully. "Is that how it's gonna be between us?"

George glared at him, his eyes burning with rage. He wasn't about to entertain the conversation anymore, and he knew there wasn't really anything he could've done to change whatever outcome would occur following this moment.

"Tell you what," Mr. J grinned. "For all the crimes that you've done against me, I'll have to punish you, of course."

George inhaled a deep breath, his eyes barely glancing up to meet Puffy's increasingly concerned face.

"I'll be fair, I promise," Mr. J added.

Before anyone else could move, not even a second later, the gun in Mr. J's hands went off.

George's shoulder burned, pain piercing through his blades outwards towards his arm and his chest. The gun recoiled, and before another beat could be processed, another bang shot off. George fell to the ground, the pain crawling from the impact wound on his leg to his foot and his knee.

George caught Puffy's horrified gasp, surging forward before somebody he didn't quite recognize placed a hand on her shoulder to stop her from intervening.

"There we go," Mr. J crouched down to George bleeding on the floor of the abandoned building. "I didn't kill you. I expect a thank you note at some point."

George let out a strangled groan, writhing on the floor though he'll be damned if he cried out for help in front of Mr. J.

"Pleasure doing business with you," Mr. J said as he sauntered out of the building.

George was losing blood at a dangerous rate. The shots that immobilized him were strategic

because as much as he hated to admit it, Mr. J was a ruthlessly smart bastard.

"Puffy-" The man who's stopped her called as she shrugged off his hand on her shoulder.

"We don't do this shit Galecki," Puffy spat as she moved forward to tend to George. "We take them to holding. We don't play god and shoot them."

"He didn't," Galecki replied. "He shot, and whether or not the excessive bleeding kills him is up to nature."

That's complete bullshit, both Puffy and George knew as much.

"If you help him and you don't walk out of here with me," Galecki's voice was threatening and it stopped Puffy before she could even kneel down next to George. "You don't walk out of here at all. He wouldn't allow it."

Puffy froze, eyes looking down and meeting George's desperate and pain-filled eyes. George could barely utter a single word to plead for help.

"And your family," Galecki said. "He wouldn't allow it."

The fear that flashed across Puffy's face was understandable and George couldn't even blame her for taking steps back.

"This isn't why I called you," Puffy said, still looking at George as she slowly took steps back. George knew the statement wasn't for him though. "This isn't right."

"We stop criminals," Galecki said. "404 is a criminal."

"So is Davenport," Puffy whirled and hissed at Galecki.

"Walk out of here with me," Galecki offered. "You don't wanna do this."

Puffy turned and spared a glance at a very injured and pale George. She didn't need to say a word, her eyes were apologetic enough.

Puffy walked out as quickly as she could, getting into one of Herobrine's cars before Galecki even left the building.

One quick text, that was the only thing that she was able to do before Galecki opened the door and climbed into the car with her.

"Let's get out of here," Galecki told the driver.

The pit in Puffy's stomach grew the farther away that car drove from the building.

And the car didn't even reach the end of the street when George finally passed out.

Chapter End Notes

bet you wish you didn't ask for an update huh.

put down your pitchforks, i will try to get an update out next week (i promise, real not fake)

until then, comments and kudos are much appreciated !!

Sub to user if you'd like to get updates for when i post new fics (other fics) in the future. Sub to this fic though i think a lot of people already are !!

follow me on [twitter](#) !

Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

IM LATE I KNOW

it's fine

here's a 10k chapter update for chapter 10

hopefully, the super long update will make up for it.

hope you guys like this one

PS. CHECK OUT THIS [REALLY COOL FANART](#) BY [BASIL](#) AND FOLLOW THEM

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The show must go on, right?

Regardless of what had happened in the past two hours: all the yelling across the two teams, the questions that sounded more like interrogations, the accusations and speculations, and the botched investigation, there was work that needed to be done and done it shall be.

So that's the story of how Dream walked into the Sam Houston State University, Tommy ended up being the chosen person to accompany him, though Tubbo and Ranboo weren't too far outside of the campus waiting.

It was a little confusing, walking into a series of building that you've never seen, trying to navigate the floors and the string of offices to try and find someone who you don't even know the last name off.

But Dream found himself outside of Ponk's office eventually. Tommy stood behind him, fiddling impatiently as Dream inhaled a deep breath before knocking.

"Office hours are from 2 to 4," Ponk's voice called out from behind the door.

Tommy made a little confused face though Dream simply ignored the warning and opened the door.

"I said it's-" Ponk's voice faltered off the second Dream fully stepped into the office. Dream waited until Tommy was fully inside before he closed the door behind them both. "I didn't say come in."

"I know," Dream said. "It's kind of an emergency."

"What do you want?" Ponk asked harshly.

"We need your help," Dream answered.

"No thank you," Ponk replied quickly. "Last time I helped one of you, it didn't end so well for me," He hummed, barely looking off of his desk while he continued on to ruffle with his papers.

"It's urgent," Dream attempted to convince him. "It's important."

"Everything always is, isn't it?" Ponk scoffed. "Call 911 if it's such an emergency for you," He mocked.

"Ponk-" Dream couldn't even entertain the joke. "People's lives are in danger, we need your-"

"No, you know what?" Ponk exploded. "No. I tried, didn't I? I tried to help you, and I did my best job, and all I got in return is my work being stolen, destroyed, and also a pretty bad breakup on top of that so-" Ponk threw his hand up. "I apologize for not caring about trying to help you."

"Okay well," Dream sputtered. "I'm sorry for stealing your files, but we needed to get it out of Herobrine's hands."

Ponk froze in his seat and glanced up, his head still down though he looked very confused. Ponk met Dream's eyes, his eyebrows furrowing with a frown.

"What?" Ponk mumbled softly.

"Look, a lot of things were happening, and the intention isn't to steal your work from the database, we just needed to get it away from Herobrine," Dream explained hastily. "We're more than willing to give it back to you and it's not at all destroyed, we just need-"

"Wait, wait, wait, what do you mean you had to get it away from Herobrine?" Ponk asked.

"That's why we stole it out of the Houston facility," Dream explained.

There fell an uncomfortable silence and Ponk sat there trying to make sense of what he'd just heard. The words were quite simple, but he was confused still. Dream even more so. And we're not even going to start with Tommy, who stood there blankly waiting for either one of the men in the room to move.

"You stole my work out of their facility?" Ponk exclaimed after a beat.

"Isn't that what you're mad about?" Dream asked.

"No," Ponk told him, slowly standing up from his chair. "Herobrine was the one who stole my work."

"What?" Dream asked. "I thought you worked with them."

"Yeah," Ponk mumbled. "It was supposed to be a consult, a little help. And I did it, and I also did so much more, but then they took it over and completely butchered it."

"Herobrine took over-" Dream said, "Right, Ponk- To be honest, we don't know what's in files, that's why we need you to help us."

"With what exactly," Ponk said. "I don't understand what's happening."

"Well, I'd be more than happy to explain everything to you and then some if you just come with me," Dream told him.

"No," Ponk replied within seconds.

"No?" Dream repeated.

"No," Ponk said. "You got it away from Herobrine, I'm sure you can deal with the rest of it. I don't wanna deal with anything else you have to say."

"Ponk, people are in danger. You made it, you of all people should know how dangerous it is," Dream stopped. "I'm guessing. Again, I don't really know."

"Do you know how hard it is to get away from you people?" Ponk asked. "Like seriously, do you know how difficult it is? Hell, it's been how many years? Absolutely zero communication with anyone from Herobrine, and yet here you are, still at my doorstep bothering me."

"We tried to deal with it ourselves, we really did," Dream said. "But our experts have failed so-"

"If I help you, Dream," Ponk stated. "If I even put one step back into that world, they'll never let me go back out."

"I promise," Dream said. "You have my word, I'll make sure no one ever bothers you again once we get this whole thing sorted."

"Dream, your word means nothing," Ponk laughed coldly. "Don't you get it? I've been screwed over and made to shit by Herobrine's word, I don't care."

"Well, we're not just from Herobrine," Tommy finally piped up in defense.

Ponk stopped and turned to look at Tommy in the face. He squinted, eyes now piercing right through Tommy so harshly that it quite literally made Tommy take a step back. It was a weird sight for Ponk for sure, this young boy who's towering over him almost as tall as Dream was, just standing in his office silently for the past few minutes without uttering a single word even though he very much looked like he was aching to.

"Who's the kid?" Ponk asked Dream.

"That's Tommy," Dream replied.

"Oh come on man," Tommy whined, though oddly it was geared towards Ponk. "We've met before," Tommy insisted.

"Have we?" Ponk mumbled blankly.

"Yes!" Tommy exclaimed. "That little dinner party in Norway? And I'm not a kid."

"With-" Ponk muttered lowly. "You're- Wait, hang on, why are you with him?" Ponk turned back to Dream and pointed at Tommy.

"This might be a good time to let you know what I'm currently being chased down by the authorities," Dream sighed. "Stole your files out of Herobrine's database, told you."

"So you're working with Wilbur," Ponk began pacing in his office. "And 404."

"It's his soulmate," Tommy replied.

Dream's hands stretched out though he quickly clenched his fist before he could choke the life out of Tommy. The strangled groans from his mouths were enough to catch Ponk's attention.

"Tommy-" Dream growled.

"What? I didn't know it was a secret," Tommy said innocently.

"You're joking," Ponk said, looking up to Dream. "He's not-"

"Everyone is as surprised as you are, trust me," Dream assured Ponk. "Myself included."

"I love George," Ponk exclaimed. "You should've just sent him to come and get me. I would've gone."

"He was supposed to, but he's missing," Tommy replied.

"And he took your files so-" Dream said. "That's why we don't have your files. Don't know what to do with them, or without them. And don't know what he's doing with them."

"What does that mean?" Ponk asked. "You don't know what George is going to do with my files?"

"It's complicated," Dream informed him.

"He might be giving it back to Herobrine to save Dream's ass," Tommy said bluntly.

"Tommy!" Dream scolded once again.

"Well someone's got to tell him," Tommy yelped defensively.

"No, no, no," Ponk shook his head. "You just told me that you stole it out of Herobrine and now George is giving it back. I can't deal with this, I don't want to deal with this."

"Hence the urgency of the matter," Dream said. "Please," He begged. "Can you just please come with us and we'll figure it out along the way?"

"I don't know," Ponk hesitated.

"Look, we're not Herobrine, so my word has to at least mean something to you," Dream's pleas were desperate. "And have I mentioned the authorities are after me, so it'd be great if I weren't at a very public University in one of the largest cities in all of America."

Ponk stood there silently, his eyes fixed on the carpet of his office as if it was the most interesting

thing in the world to him. His mind was racing with a thousand and one contemplations though his thoughts were quickly interrupted by Tommy once again.

"Ponk, we either walk out of here together or you're getting dragged out of this office, either way, you're leaving with us," Tommy said.

Dream turned his head slowly until he faced Tommy with an incredulous look on his face. Ponk too looked up with a confused and slightly offended look on his face. Dream just shook his head and Tommy shrugged at Dream.

"I mean, there's four of us," Tommy replied to Dream's exasperated body movements. "We could just kidnap him like the original plan."

"The original plan was to kidnap me?" Ponk questioned.

"Yes," Tommy replied.

"No," Dream exclaimed.

"Why are you lying to him?" Tommy asked.

"God, I should've taken Ranboo," Dream looked up to the ceiling and groaned.

"You wanted to kidnap me?" Ponk asked again though this time his voice was laced with a hint of amusement and laughter.

"Will you please?" Dream simply asked.

"Alright, alright," Ponk raised his hand. "Fine."

Ponk walked back to his desk and rummaged around, getting all his important belongings like his phone and keys, stuffing them into his pockets before he puts on his coat. He even paused to send an email out to his students, telling them that the office hours are canceled and that his classes are

going to be taken over by his teaching assistant indefinitely.

Dream was itching where he stood as he waited, still jumpy over the thought that potentially anyone would crash through the window and shoot them down. Sending a SWAT team to find the people they want dead isn't really out of the norm for the people working with Herobrine. It has been done before. Dream should know, he was the one who sent the SWAT team.

Once Ponk was ready and finished, the three of them finally made their way to the parking lot where a very normal-looking black Ford F150 sat in the midst of the rest of the cars, Tubbo and Ranboo sleeping and sitting on the bed of the truck respectively.

"They're children," Ponk muttered to Dream.

"I heard that," Tommy contested. "I'm not a child."

"You were going to kidnap me with three children in a black pickup truck?" Ponk continued on with his sentence, disregarding anything Tommy had previously said.

"The plan wasn't to kidnap you," Dream insisted.

"Sure it wasn't," Ponk drawled.

"Okay, maybe-" Dream admitted. "Maybe if we were desperate."

"You couldn't even pick a more discrete car? What were you gonna do? Tie me up and throw me on the bed of the truck? What if the traffic cam catches us?" Ponk didn't stop his rant.

"What's wrong with the truck?" Dream asked a little defensively, even though it wasn't even his car of choice. He'd stolen it off Sapnap. "Gotta blend in with the Texas roads, there's like dozens of these trucks everywhere."

"Do you do construction?" Ponk questioned and before Dream could open his mouth, Ponk continued. "Then you're gonna get caught looking suspicious in a truck with three children traveling around the campus area."

"You're really judging my kidnapping plans?" Dream shook his head. "Get in the car Ponk," Dream said as he banged the back of the truck to alert Tubbo and Ranboo. "You too. Get in the car."

"Can we ride on the back of the truck?" Tubbo asked.

"No, I'm not getting stopped by the police for having kids fly out of the back of the truck, get in," Dream replied with a hint of annoyance though it was received very well.

"Come on, Tubbo," Ranboo mumbled as he nudged his friend off and got into the back seat of the truck just after Tommy.

The ride back to their warehouse was just about as awkward as you thought it might be. That means it's really, really awkward. What else could you say really? Imagine the conversation between the two men at the front of the car.

Hey, I'm sorry you broke up with your soulmate slash boyfriend because he works for a potentially corrupt private law enforcement agency that stole your work and destroyed it and I don't know, I'm guessing your boyfriend slash soulmate took their side. That must suck, but now I need your help to stop said government agency.

No problem. I'm sorry your soulmate is a criminal because I know that you worked for the said corrupted government agency and that must be complicated to be the good guy or think you're the good guy and your soulmate kills people. And also he ran away with my files that are highly dangerous information and he might be giving them to-

Okay.

It would be a very awkward conversation to be held with three blissfully ignorant teens in the backseat of the truck especially between two people who probably have talked maybe less than a dozen conversations in their lifetimes, the last ones being a few years ago. Very awkward.

Thankfully the ride back was quick and filled with bad karaoke and Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo talking amongst each other like a very comfortable white noise while occasionally pulling them into the conversation like asking Ponk what he teaches.

It wasn't awful, it was actually quite pleasant. But this doesn't mean they weren't happy and glad that they finally got there and they could get out of the car. Dream nearly jumped off the car when it was still rolling, actually, despite being the driver.

The situation inside the warehouse was somehow more chaotic and absurd than when Dream had left it about two hours ago. People were yelling over each other, multiple monitors, computers, and laptops were running at the same time, there was paper strewn around. Maybe that's why he'd taken the kids with him.

"Ponk!" Bad greeted cheerfully as he was the first one to see Ponk out of the corner of his eye despite being in the middle of trying to break up a potential fight between Skeppy and Sapnap. "Good to see you!"

"Hi Bad," Ponk chuckled nervously, his eyes slowly flickered towards Bad then Skeppy, before going back.

"You're finally here, my god," Wilbur was less than kind, his voice only irritable at the timing. "Couldn't have been slower, could you?"

"I'll punch your teeth out, try me," Dream replied back casually.

"Ponk, welcome," Eret greeted. "So glad you could join us."

"This is-" Ponk looked around the room at the occupants. "This is a very weird group of people. I don't like it."

"That side's kind of boring," Fundy told him. "It's okay, we're trying to make them break some laws."

"Don't even joke about that," Karl said, taking a rolled-up wad of paper and whacking it against Fundy's back, as he nudged his head slowly at Dream and Fundy immediately shut up.

"Okay," Ponk muttered uncomfortably. "What can I help you with?"

"Here, have a chair," Jack said nicely as he rolled a little office chair for Ponk to sit on.

Ponk did end up sitting on the rolling office chair, though it was a weird and awkward position. No one else was really sitting, except for Karl who was hunched over a severely overheating laptop, and Fundy next to him with an equally burning up computer. The rest of the group were standing around the spacey warehouse, leaving Ponk to sit on a chair in the middle of the room, the harsh fluorescent light shining down on him like an interrogation spotlight. Thankfully the mood wasn't quite like that.

"Care to explain?" Ponk asked again as he settled himself in his seat.

"So we wiped out the Herobrine database," Sapnap said.

"Jumping straight right in huh?" Wilbur commented though Sapnap easily dismissed it.

"Primarily we were looking deeper into what know to be called by Project Overworld?" Sapnap had a little questioning tone at the end. "You had something to do with that right? If we're correct."

"*Something*," Ponk scoffed. "God, that's almost as insulting as being robbed."

"What is it?" Quackity asked. "What's Project Overworld?"

Ponk sighed and sat back in his chair, his jaw was clenched, teeth-gritting even only at the thought of having to retell the story. Based on the way his body language speaks, the rest of the room knew not to pester.

"When I was still with Sam," Ponk started off his story. "Two? Almost two and a half, three years ago?" He muttered to himself. "He asked me for a favor."

The silence when Ponk paused his story was deafening.

"It was simple. It was a search engine, that's it," Ponk explained. "A really good one. One that would rival Google, I should say. And honestly, it wasn't hard. It was very, very easy because all they needed it for was the Archives."

"Oh," Karl gasped. "Oh, you're the one who made the new archiving system."

"The new archiving system?" Sapnap mumbled. "Karl, your computer wasn't new at all."

"Yeah, yeah," Karl nodded. "They said there were supposed to be a revamp of the Archives, that's why I was trying to move them all into the new system."

"This was three years ago, how are you just-" Sapnap turned to Ponk who only looked back at him with an arched eyebrow. "Sorry. Continue."

"Right," Ponk said. "At least that's what they had told me. It was simple. It was a search engine specifically for the Archives. There are a lot, and I mean a lot of files that Herobrine possesses, but it's doesn't compare to Google. A single Archive is still relatively small and pointed. An in-depth high-tech algorithm to sort through the files you own isn't hard. So I did it, as a favor."

Ponk's words were bitter and cold. He inhaled a deep breath and looked up at Karl.

"You're the Archivist, right? And they only gave it to you to start using it, maybe in the past few months?" Ponk stated.

"Yes," Karl confirmed.

"See, that's because the algorithm that I made was good. A little too good, they discovered," Ponk shrugged cockily. "See, with a very small target area, the Archives, it was easy for me to navigate. So I gave them the whole package. Predictive search, assistive search, cataloging, sorting, filtering. I was essentially stealing his job," He nudged his head towards Karl.

"Thank you?" Karl mumbled confusingly.

"It was like a strike of lightning," Ponk told them. "Because I coded things that have never been coded, debugged them for weeks, went through multiple betas. It was gorgeous."

"Until?" Dream asked.

"You wanna know what they did to my baby? You wanna know what Project Overworld is?" Ponk crossed his arms, his face still trying hard not to contort into disgust. "They took my code, my algorithm, my perfectly-designed search engine, and basically multiplied it by a thousand."

"What does that mean?" Skeppy piped up.

"What it means is that what I designed to be for one Archives, now holds every single database in the world," Ponk said. "Every government or law enforcement agency that volunteered their database, or not, all within a few clicks in a computer."

"That's-" Fundy mumbled hesitantly. "How is that bad? That sounds cool."

"Oh, it is," Ponk said. "You could match a fingerprint from Berlin to a police station in Monte Carlo, a stray hair from Macau might have a match in Portugal. The world's defense system working in perfect harmony," He glanced towards one side of the room. "Would suck for you guys though. I would've made your life so much harder."

"So," Ranboo started. "They took your code and pumped it up with steroids. Overkill."

"*Volunteered, or not,*" Ponk repeated. "I would've been fine with it if it had stopped there. I might've even helped them. But they didn't stop there. They made a monster."

Ponk stood up from his chair, clearly still very angry about what had happened despite it occurring a couple of years ago. Of course, it was actually still actively happening, so Ponk had every right to be angry and upset about the situation.

"Assistive search. That was the golden goose that I created," Ponk chuckled. "See, I made it so that when you search into something and you can't find it, it'll find you things that will help you find it. It's not really like a *similar to this*, or *you might be looking for this*. No, it wasn't designed to find you the next best thing. It was designed to look for the next closest link to finding it."

"That's-" Tubbo mumbled. "That's confusing."

"Say you want to look for an antique watch, made by a Swiss in the year 1947. Specific, right?" Ponk explained. "Say it doesn't exist on the internet. Your regular search engine would give you similar antique watches. Maybe one made in Germany, maybe one made in the year 1962. Standard, correct?"

"Sure," Eret mumbled.

"My algorithm will go through all existing records in its database and find you all the Swiss watchmakers that were active in 1947 and give you their names, next of kin, inventory, sales records, and everything," Ponk explained.

"That's disturbing," Jack frowned. "What?"

"It will find you that Swiss watch from 1947," Ponk said proudly. "It won't give you a watch from Italy or Austria. It won't find you a watch from 1946 or 1948. It will find you a way to get exactly what you need."

"It's a detective," Bad said. "You made your search engine into a little detective."

"It wouldn't have been so bad if Herobrine hadn't breached every single privacy contact known to man," Ponk was pacing. "It only got really bad when it essentially steals every single record that exists in the digital world. You ever wonder why they sent up that satellite?"

"The satellite?" Tommy muttered. "What satellite?"

"Project Overworld sent up a private satellite not long after they stole my creation and gave it a makeover," Ponk said. "And it's been stealing information ever since."

"Stealing information," Wilbur mumbled. "Are you sure about that?"

"Yeah," Ponk's laugh was eery. "All that online DNA tests? Ancestry.com, 23 and Me. Bank statements, every single financial institution that has an online portal. We're talking about every Instagram, Twitter, Facebook post that has ever been made. If your dentist keeps his dental records on a drive, medical history, and record. Maybe your photo from the DMV, if you're ever filed your taxes through the internet, Visa forms. University student portals, research papers, and even your Sunday order from Doordash."

"That-" Eret muttered. "That's-"

"Your Youtube subscriptions, your Amazon cart," Ponk continued. "Every single personal email, or message. Your locations. If you have GPS on your phone, on your car, they've been stealing every single information from the people that they could get their hands on."

"You did that?" Dream asked.

"No," Ponk shook his head. "Stealing private information isn't really my forte, and you don't really need high tech to violate people's privacy, you just need a bunch of people that are willing to look the other ways on all your illegal activities," Ponk scoffed. "I just made it easier for them to look for people they don't like."

"So if-" Sarnap said slowly. "If you broke the law, and they can't find you anywhere. A trace of DNA will get you your next of kin, the social media will give them the relationship, who you're closest to, DMV form or University portal will give them your parents' address."

"Bingo," Ponk said bitterly. "Right on the money."

"Oh god," Karl was the first to speak up after a long while of uncomfortable silence. "And they're- But they can't just steal all of that information. There are laws, and-"

"But Herobrine is a privately owned agency, and it's an international agency. The only people who could ever prosecute is the UN," Wilbur hummed.

"And you're not going to put your only defense mechanism in prison," Eret added with a particularly pissed-off look on his face. "Especially not when your own people are on the panel."

"What does that mean?" Skeppy asked. Eret closed their eyes and sighed, seemingly blurting out something that they should've never entertained in the first place. "What do you mean by that Eret?"

"I said what I said," Eret said. "What?" She tilted her head. "You thought I stole all that jewelry only of shits, now did I?"

"What about the weapons?" Ranboo interjected before anyone else managed to get Eret to elaborate on his ominous statements.

"What weapons?" Ponk froze and stared at Ranboo quizzically.

"There were 16 billion dollars set aside for Project Overworld," Tubbo replied. "Dream told us."

"Are they really getting rid of Techno?" Tommy pressed urgently.

"Who told-" Wilbur didn't even finish his sentence before his eyes landed on Dream to which he was replied with a non-committal shrug. "You don't have to worry about Techno," Wilbur assured the clearly concerned kids.

"It's still 16 *billion* dollars," Ranboo said. "What are the weapons for?"

"Billion?" Ponk was breathless, falling back on his chair. "They have 16 billion for weapons. And Techno, he's- I've heard about him, he does really high tech weapons, really deadly weapons," Ponk's gaze was accusatory,

"He's not working with them, he's working with us," Tommy said defensively. "They were trying to steal his plans, those fuckers."

"But they didn't?" Ponk looked up to Dream, clearly worried.

"But they didn't," Dream confirmed.

"With the satellite, the search engine, the stealing of all personal information, and all those weapons," Ponk gulped while shaking his head. "It's starting to look like we're going straight into a superhero movie."

"Woah, woah, woah," Sapnap piped up. "Which one?"

"That's what you're worried about?" Quackity commented.

"No shut up," Sapnap shushed him before moving forward and staring at Ponk's face. "Which one?" He repeated.

"I think you know the one," Ponk's eyes were more than clear warning signs. "How much do you think planes costs?"

"A good one? A big one? About 100 million," Fundy replied easily.

"More than a few would fit in that budget, huh Sapnap?" Ponk said. "Might even have space for a really big aircraft. They already have a satellite anyway, it won't be too hard."

"You're kidding," Sapnap muttered.

"Does this look like something that I'd joke about?" Ponk said. "And I'm guessing- Sam didn't tell you anything."

"Sam's in engineering," Bad completed.

"Ironic isn't it?" Ponk scoffed.

"So what, he makes planes and Herobrine buys weapons, why does that matter?" Skeppy said.

"So in the movie-" Sapnap said hesitantly. "Basically what they did was find people who are or would potentially become a threat to them and the plan was to kill them off."

"It was a search algorithm, based on grades, diplomas, extracurricular activities, social tendencies, tracking people's daily lives, they could predict who would be-" Ponk hesitated.

"Renegades," Eret smirked, finishing Ponk's thoughts.

The smile on his face was unsettling, to say the least. You don't smile at the thought of thousands, maybe millions of people being gunned down. You don't smile when 16 billion dollars worth of weapons are mentioned. You don't. Or at least you're not supposed to.

But some part of Dream understood it. And as much as he hates to admit it, it's starting to look like they were right about Herobrine being total assholes.

Though, somehow, Dream could also feel that it wasn't entirely, or at least not solely because it was the huge ego stroke that it ended up being, the whole being proven right situation. There was a bit of grin at the word renegade. A bit of pride puffing up Eret's chest and collectively the people around them.

Renegade, defined by the dictionary to be a person who deserts and betrays an organization, country, or set of principles.

You could make the argument that every criminal, everyone who breaks the law is a renegade, though this situation was a bit different. Dream is not defending the fact that he's in a warehouse with some of the most distinguished, in the horrible way possible, criminals in the world. They've done horrible things, the worst of the worst, though this, Dream suspects, is specifically targeted towards their defection against Herobrine.

Which, at this point, it seems that Dream and his team would also be categorized under the same title. Truth be told, he isn't sure if he should be proud of that fact or not.

"They were planning to eliminate any threat that might go against whatever they have planned," Skeppy concluded.

"So we were right to steal the files," Quackity muttered lowly.

"Yes, you were," Ponk nodded.

"You're welcome," Wilbur answered, which Quackity very quickly growled at.

"But-" Jack was visibly nervous.

"Fuck," Dream grumbled.

"So," Ponk sounded exhausted and he's barely been working with them for an hour. "George took your files and ran."

"And we can't find him," Sapnap continued. "Trust me, I tried."

"You have a good running computer?" Ponk asked.

"It's not terrible," Fundy replied.

"Alright," Ponk nodded at Fundy before stepping towards Karl. "Let's see what magic I can still do, Archivist."

The people from both sides were a little stunned, gaping as Ponk followed Karl and Fundy towards the closest station.

"So you're gonna help?" Bad asked.

"Just don't tell Sam," Ponk answered.

Watching Fundy work the computer was always somewhat of a marvel. Fundy was quick, he was witty, he had all the quick escape routes and could work in intense situations that would require a dirty but very effective solution. He types at an incredible speed, his brain working even faster, and all that always coming in clutch within seconds of impending doom.

Watching Karl work on the computer was a little different. His way is always more methodical, more organized. This is not to say that he couldn't bail them out of emergencies. He could, he's done that countless times in the short time that he's worked with the team. But where Fundy thinks on the spot and fixes the problem, Karl had already prepped dozens of backup plans to combat any failures that might occur.

Still, neither of them was anywhere close to the way Ponk worked the computer. He doesn't type fast, he doesn't do anything particularly impressive. It was the simplicity that shocked them.

Shortcuts, and lines of code that don't even exceed the length of a single Tweet. It was clean, almost too clean, that it almost didn't make sense then things started to pop out. Information began pouring in on the screen following whatever universal cheat code Ponk had placed on the dark web, and it took him no more than 20 minutes to start giving them intel.

"Guess who's in town?" Ponk glanced up towards Dream. "You're not gonna like it."

"There are a lot of people I don't like right now, Ponk," Dream replied. "Who is it?"

"Galecki," Ponk replied, and this was immediately followed by groans from Dream's side of the room.

"Okay," Jack gave them a weird look. "Who's Galecki and why don't we like him?"

"He's our-" Bad scowled. "Dream is our lead as an active ground team and Dream reports to him, he reports to-" Bad's eyes flickered nervously towards Eret.

"My father," Eret completed the sentence. "Galecki is one of the Herobrine board's cronies. One of several, actually."

"Why is that important again?" Tubbo asked.

"Well, it's important because why else would Dream's supervisor comes to Houston days after Project Overworld has been stolen right from under their nose?" Ponk told him.

"He's one of them," Dream concluded, and at this, both Ponk and Eret nodded. "Where is he?"

"Sitting pretty in a hotel room," Ponk replied after a few more minutes of him typing in front of the computer. "Though I can tell you where he's gonna be in about two hours if you're interested."

Dream gave Ponk a flat look, one which Ponk ignored with a simple shrug as he continued to scan through all the resources that he could steal from without getting caught.

"There's a cargo ship on the dock West of Galveston Bay coming in from Somalia," Ponk stated. "Ring a bell for you?"

"Somalia," Skeppy mumbled. "Somalia, Somali-"

"They listed the cargo as clothes and undisclosed merchandise," Ponk read off a fully filled-out form from the screen.

"Techno's guns," Ranboo said. "Mr. J was going to get them made in Somalia, like knock-offs from Techno's designs."

"I thought we busted that," Quackity said. "We took out Johansen, Livingston, Marakova, Brouillard- We took out everyone that was working on that, how are they still sending weapons from Somalia?"

"Well we don't know it's weapons," Fundy mumbled.

"It's weapons," Wilbur confirmed. "It's definitely weapons."

"They're like cockroaches," Eret answered Quackity's completely rhetorical question. "You stomp one, they just keep popping up. Even more than before."

"What does this have to do with George?" Tommy asked. "Where's George?"

"I didn't look for George," Ponk confessed. "Look, I love George, but this isn't really about him. I went looking for my files."

"So you think Galecki, Davenport, or his people already have our files?" Sapnap stated.

"No," Ponk said. "But I showed you where to find them, so it's your job to figure out if they have it. I don't mind George having the files, hiding up in the mountains or whatever, as long as Herobrine doesn't get it."

"So your plan," Ranboo said. "Your plan is to prove a negative."

"This one's smart, I like this one," Ponk smiled. "Prove that they don't have the files, and we'll be in the clear," He nodded. "Plus, stopping an illegal weapons shipment from entering the area sounds like something you'd wanna do anyway."

There was a bit of silence that followed, wordless conversation exchanged through exchanging glances from Dream to his own teammates. He waited for Sapnap and Bad to give him a little nod of agreement and approval before looking at Wilbur and Eret. Failing to decipher what they were thinking in between themselves though it was very clear to Dream that they agreed to continue with whatever plan was necessary to solve this issue.

"We leave in 80 minutes," Dream declared with no further discussion. "Weapons, gear, armor, the whole nine. It's probably gonna get messy."

It was a weird feeling. Dream was used to telling his team where to go, what to do, and when to do it. Commanding isn't something that was new to him at all, he knows that he's good at it. Though the feeling in his stomach when Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo nodded before going to work, the physical steps back that Wilbur and Eret took to let him take the floor, made his stomach turn a little uneasily. But he would not lie and say that it was all unenjoyable.

"Are you okay?" Karl asked as he got off the chair and went after Sapnap who'd walked away once the team dispersed. "You looked a little sick and pale earlier."

"I'm fine," Sapnap tried to convince him. "I'm okay, Karl."

"Now, don't go lying to me Sapnap," Karl scolded lightly. "Come on, what's wrong?"

"I just have a bad feeling," Sapnap confessed.

"What bad feeling?" Karl asked, bringing his hand up to cup Sapnap's face, his thumb caressing his cheek. Sapnap smiled a little, quickly leaning into the touch.

"Just not great," Sapnap sighed. "Last time we were at a dock there were bombs and I nearly blew up."

"What?" Karl gasped worriedly. "When was this?"

"Like maybe a week before I met you." It was a bit of a horrifying thought to think about, but Sarnap can't help the little fondness to his voice on the second half of that sentence. "I'm fine see, I'm fine."

"Then what's the bad feeling?" Karl continued to press on.

"Well," Sarnap pursed his lips. "Last time the person who saved our lives was George. And he's still missing, with all the files. Can't blame me for having a bit of concern in mind."

"Yeah," Karl hummed, though Sarnap would tell by the way Karl scrunched up his face, that he was a little upset. Maybe a little jealous. "Well, now I'm here."

And Sarnap was right.

"You are," Sarnap agreed, tipping Karl's chin towards him for a little peck.

"I can save your life this time," Karl mumbled, his cheeks flushed pink.

"You can," Sarnap chuckled. "Though let's maybe not-hope for a situation in which that would be necessary."

"Okay," Karl giggled in reply.

"Thank you for checking up on me," Sarnap told him, pressing a soft kiss on his nose. "Now I gotta go help with the explosives. I don't really trust Tubbo."

It was one last kiss before started to walk away, though Karl's hands lingered and tugged on his arm when Sarnap got a few steps out.

"Sapnap-" Karl called out again, his voice a little desperate. Sapnap turned and raised an eyebrow, waiting for the follow-up statement. "Are you sure that's the only thing you're worried about?"

Sapnap exhaled a little laugh, his hands squeezing Karl's softly as he stepped back into his spot, face to face, his eyes gazing deep into Karl's big blue eyes.

"You have something you wanna ask me, darling?" Sapnap's voice was low and soft, and it made Karl's heart ache even more.

"Weapons," Karl said. "Davenport."

"I know," Sapnap nodded.

"He's gonna be there, isn't he?" Karl's voice was shaky and filled with anxiety.

"Probably," Sapnap replied honestly.

"You're not nervous?" Karl questioned.

"Why would I be?" Sapnap's smile was more charming than ever. "You're gonna be there to save my life, aren't you?"

"Yeah," Karl said. "Of course."

"Then I've got nothing to worry about," Sapnap told him. "But we do have to prepare."

"Yeah, yeah," Karl laughed nervously. "I'll go talk to Ponk to see if we can find something else."

"Alright, see you later," Sapnap excused himself as Karl made his way back to Ponk and Fundy.

Sapnap didn't get quite far enough before he was met with Quackity, sitting and waiting for him

with a look on his face that Sapnap could only describe as the Quackity judgment. It was like any other judgy look, but with extra irritation and disappointment.

"You're gonna lie to him?" Quackity asked softly.

"I'm not lying to him," Sapnap didn't even need to ask for context, he knew exactly what Quackity was referring to.

"Right," Quackity drawled. "You're not nervous to see Punz. I believe you."

"I'm not," Sapnap said defensively.

"And still you felt the need to lie," Quackity said.

"I didn't lie, I'm not nervous," Sapnap was adamant.

"You forget," Quackity said. "Other than Dream, I'm your best friend."

The two were at a standstill, the tension between them was thicker than blood. Quackity's gaze was stern and Sapnap knew that he would unfold very quickly.

"Karl told me," Quackity said. "You know, he- He wants to talk about you a lot. You make him very excited," He continued. "And he told me what you said. That you don't care about soulmates, that Punz wasn't yours. And Karl was so relieved."

"It's true," Sapnap replied curtly.

"You don't know that," Quackity said. "That's not what you told me."

"Q-" Sapnap sighed.

"You don't know if Punz isn't your soulmate, Sapnap, you've never tried. Don't lie to him," Quackity muttered. "And a crush? Really? Nevermind that Punz was probably the first person you've ever loved, that he brought you to his family, that you-"

"What would be the point?" Sapnap interjected harshly. "Tell me, Q, what would be the point of me telling Karl all of those things?" His eyes darken.

"You lied to his face," Quackity said.

"So what do you want me to do?" Sapnap exclaimed. "Tell him, *oh I totally understand where Dream's coming from because I too loved a man who worked for Davenport*. Tell him, *yeah sorry, I lied. I am super nervous about seeing Punz because if anyone in my team tries to hurt him, I don't know what I'd do*. What even could I do?"

"Just-" Quackity stopped.

The words that left Sapnap's lips were desperately pleading for Quackity to understand, and he understood too easily. Sapnap had probably played the different scenarios and different outcomes in his head about a dozen times, and he did the only thing he could make sense of, no matter how wrong it felt.

"He's good for you," Quackity continued softly. "When or if something happens, you might need to choose."

"I know who to choose," Sapnap said.

"Do you?" Quackity asked ominously before walking away, leaving Sapnap to ponder in his thoughts.

The plan to ambush the cargo ship was less than simple. In fact, it was not simple at all. The last time they busted did something nearly identical to this situation, it was an emergency, and all they did was call HQ by the end of their crusade to clean up after all of that mess.

They didn't wanna think about how Livingston's stock of weapons was now in Herobrine custody, or what that meant to them and Project Overworld. Needless to say, knowing Herobrine was involved, Galecki especially coming to the cargo ship for reasons that aren't that difficult to

predict, they can't very well hand it off to HQ.

Working with other law enforcement is more complicated than anyone would like it to be, especially the world-renowned criminal side of the group.

"FBI is 30 minutes out. They're bringing the SWAT team," Karl said. "We have state troopers rolling in a bit, we also flagged down a few local patrol and detectives for good measure-

"That's too many pigs," Wilbur sneered. "I don't like it."

"News reporters for channel 5 and NBC are also coming, CNN is bringing in a chopper," Fundy said.

"And the news?" Tommy whined. "God if this doesn't work."

"It'll work, it'll work," Bad assured them. "They just need a big and public bust, multiple agencies so that they can't hide papers within themselves. News so that they can't make it seem like nothing."

"We have half an hour to find what we're looking for, expose all their guns," Eret reiterated.

"And get out before we get caught," Quackity said. "Sounds easy enough."

"Be careful and don't get killed," Dream's parting words weren't really ones that spark confidence.

A group of the dozen people trying to sneak onto a giant cargo ship was very difficult to hide. In fact, it was nearly impossible.

It was impossible, because before Dream even got to the upper deck of the ship, he, Bad, and Skeppy were immediately surrounded by armed guards.

"Two, four, six, eight-" Skeppy sang nonchalantly before sending a kick one of the guard's chest, sending him off-board. An arm stretched out to get Skeppy, and he only pulled the arm forward

before bringing his other elbow down, dislocating the man's shoulder with a loud sickening crack.

"Steady," Bad called as he proceeded to launch a knife through Skeppy that embedded itself on the back of the person that Skeppy was holding down. Three more knives flew across the air and it hit two targets (one poor got two) and Dream was ever more thankful that he was standing behind Bad. At least Skeppy didn't have to worry about the projectiles.

"I think Galecki's at the chopper deck," Skeppy said as he kicked the back of a guard's knee before stealing the rifle out of his hands and throwing it off the deck after he disassembled the clip.
"They're always at the chopper deck."

"Go, we'll cover," Bad told Dream and Dream started to take off running.

"Anything?" Dream called into the comms.

A communication line that's filled with a dozen people is about as chaotic as it could be. This is precisely why you don't ask a question without specifying who it's directed to.

"Found 'em," Ranboo said. "Crates and crates, and crates of 'em."

"They look kinda boring," Tubbo commented. "At least Techno's guns got some flair."

"No bombs, we checked," Tommy finished.

"Can't find big computers or tiny flash drives," Jack said. "This is impossible."

"15 minutes," Fundy called out. "I could literally hear the choppers coming in closer."

"Keep looking," Eret insisted. "The least we could do is be thorough."

"I'm on the third going to-" Sapnap's voice was immediately cut out.

"Sapnap?" Karl called.

The noises that came from Sapnap's earpiece sounded far away though it was unmistakable that it was a series of punches and groans along with a few gunshots.

"Quackity, get to Sapnap, now," Dream barked.

"I know, I know," Quackity heaved, as he too dodged a fist flying at his face. "I'm a little busy."

"I'm coming to help," Karl said urgently.

"Don't," Quackity barked back.

"I had field training, and clearly you need more help," Karl said.

"Fundy you are not allowed to let Karl out of the van," Quackity said. "Sapnap is never gonna forgive me if you get hurt, Karl."

"He's right," Bad regrettably agreed. "Minimal field training isn't enough for an ambush Karl, we'll be alright."

"Dream where are you, I think Galecki is going down," Wilbur said. "I'm by the rear west-"

The rest of the voices got drowned out as Quackity fought his way through three armed men who were blocking his way to where Sapnap had walked far ahead of him first where he was presumably ambushed and attacked until his earpiece fell out.

Quackity tried to move faster, shooting as precisely as he could, people's feet, hands, immobilizing them as quickly as he could. He pulled a guy's head against his knee with a hard crash, another one he body slammed against the rails. Definitely broke a few ribs there.

When Quackity turned the corner, everything was moving too fast. Punches were being thrown, and Sapnap was being held in a pretty aggressive-looking chokehold by none other than Punz.

Quackity barely made a single thought, his instincts kicking in. Quackity was rarely and marksman, he was better at hand-to-hand combat, but he wasn't bad at shooting at all. In fact, he knew exactly how to properly aim a gun.

So Quackity did just that. He raised his gun and aimed when both men noticed, their eyes widening in panic.

"Wait Quackity, don't-" Sarnap yelled, struggling only slightly against Punz's arm.

It was a complete shock to Quackity how easily Sarnap broke free like Punz wasn't even holding him back or maybe even intentionally let him go. Unfortunately, the realization came too late as the trigger was already pulled and the bullet was barrelling through the air.

Sarnap moved himself and Punz out of the way as best as he could but the bullet struck.

The bullet hit.

"Did you get rid of them?" Punz asked Quackity, continuing as if the bullet that was shot was nothing but a minor inconvenience.

Quackity didn't answer. More so he couldn't. He needed a little time to process.

"Yeah, I think most of them are gone," Sarnap answered when Quackity didn't reply, though his eyes flickered uneasily towards Quackity.

Quackity stood there, jaw dropped, stunned, and frozen where he stood. Sarnap tried to ignore what had just happened, turning back to Punz.

"Right," Punz nodded. "You know where to go?"

"Yeah, thanks," Sarnap told him, picking up his earpiece off the floor, though he didn't put it on quite yet.

"Cool," Punz smirked, tilting his head to the side, giving Sapnap access to the side of his face.
"Now make it look good."

Sapnap nodded before swinging his right fist towards Punz's face, colliding with his cheek making Punz tumble back with a groan.

"Your right hook was always weaker than mine," Punz laughed, though it was clear that his jaw was going to feel that tomorrow.

Sapnap pulled back before sending another loud hit against Punz face, sending him off to the floor. Punz definitely lied. Sapnap had punches as strong as a rock, and it was enough to knock out Punz completely.

"Let's go," Sapnap said. "We gotta go," He told Quackity.

"Sapnap," Quackity called as Sapnap walked past him.

"The files aren't on board, we gotta leave," Sapnap continued on as if Quackity hadn't said a single word.

"Sapnap," He yelled even more sternly.

Quackity caught Sapnap's arms and pulled it upwards and in front of his face.

It wasn't subtle, but it wasn't something you saw unless you were looking for it, especially when you're wearing black gear. On the sleeve of Sapnap's clothes were frayed holes. Two to be exact, one slightly bigger than the other. Though their positioning was intriguing, to say the least. There were aligned. Almost as if one was a bullet entry hole and one was the exit. The fact that the fabric was dry made Quackity's heart drop.

The bullet hit.

"We *have to go*," Sapnap declared, pulling his arm away from Quackity.

Their eyes met, a hundred flashing conversations happening at light speed, their gazes hard and tense. Though a conclusion was quickly met.

"The files aren't on board," Quackity called out to his comms as he watched Sapnap put his back on again. "Let's get out of here."

"Is Sapnap's okay?" Karl's concerned voice rang through both their ears.

"Yeah," Sapnap replied, though he was still looking at Quackity. "I'm okay."

"Alright, so that's one less thing to do," Eret piped up cheerfully, though the yelling, thudding, and rapid gunfire over their comms line suggest that the fight wasn't over.

"You got the weapons out?" Wilbur asked.

"All displayed out on the docks, ready for the news chopper," Tommy said.

"Whoever can leave, leave right now. We need the minimal amount of people on the scene right now," Dream said. "Bad, Skeppy, get the kids in the car with Fundy and leave now. We'll be right behind you."

"Police in four minutes," Fundy said.

Jack ran to the van with Fundy in it, getting himself into the driver's seat as the three kids, Bad, and Skeppy filtered into the van, and Dream was thankful that they listened to what he said. At least half of his team was now clear and away from the rest of the mess.

It wasn't as clean of an ambush as he did last time. There were still arms guards coming to, or still conscious enough to run after them. But the files weren't on the ship at all, so they only needed to get the police, FBI, and even news reporters to find the illegal weapons to get them stored in the evidence locker.

So here they were, the remaining 5 people on the ship, running onto the dock while still being chased by armed guards. They never even stopped to check whether these were Herobrine men or Davenport's men. Though at this point, it didn't seem to change much of the outcome.

"Galecki's running," Wilbur declared as he ran towards Karl's van.

"Not on my watch he isn't," Dream said.

Galecki used to be a Herobrine agent, sure. That means he's strong and fast, and probably really good at what he does. But the fact stands that he's a middle-aged man, and Dream is a mid-twenties boy at the peak of his physical performance. It didn't take him long to catch after him and throw him down.

"Is this the story?" Galecki spat blood on the ground. "Ex-Herobrine agent turns crazy and kills his supervisor. Is this what you want your mother to know?"

"Sixteen billion dollars," Dream snarled. "You fucker, you knew exactly the shit that you were doing, you absolute scheming bastard. Tell me, did you also know about Davenport's human trafficking ring?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," Galecki said innocently, though Dream retaliated with another hit across the face.

"How rotten is it?" Dream said. "How deep does it go? How many lives have you ruined under the pretense of law and defense?"

"You have a recorder on you?" Galecki asked knowingly. "You're gonna make me confess to my involvement and leave me here for the police to find me?"

"Two minutes," Karl called out.

At this point, Quackity had already jumped into the driver's seat, Wilbur climbing in next to him. Eret wasn't too far behind though he wanted to stay and watch what unfolds in front of Dream. Sapnap stayed for a different reason.

"You forget boy, I thought you everything you know," Galecki gleamed.

"You were the one who sent me to kill Davenport at Billington tower," Dream continued talking, trying to bait Galecki into incriminating himself. "I bet you were happy I failed, huh? That ambush that Johansen planned, you probably set that up too."

"See, I wonder," Galecki's smile was devious, to say the least.

"One minute," Karl told them.

"Dream, we gotta go," Sapnap said.

"I wonder," Galecki continued, his breaths panting. "Can people feel when their soulmate dies?"

The dark fire that flickered across Dream's eyes was deadly. His grip on the front of Galecki's shirt was dangerous. Dream yanked him closer.

"What did you do?" Dream growled.

"I had nothing to do with your soulmate finding you at Billington tower," Galecki's singing tone almost made it sound like he was delirious. "And I had nothing to do with your soulmate getting *shot* and left to die."

Dream saw red.

There were no more questions he could ask, no confirmation that he could want. Honestly, the statement could be entirely false and Dream had no way of verifying it. But Galecki struck a nerve and a pretty bad one at that. And Dream didn't care if it was untrue.

Before he knew what happened, they were both on the ground, Galecki below him as Dream's hands crashed down on Galecki's face, throwing punches in a fit of rage almost unseen to humans before. It took more than Sapnap and even Eret to pull him off, Wilbur had to get out of the van to

pry Dream's hands off of the bloody rat against the concrete.

"We have to go!" Eret yelled.

It wasn't until the sirens were audible to Dream that he partially shook out of his daze and allowed himself to get thrown into the back of the van. Sapnap barely getting the door closed when Quackity had already stepped on the gas and sped away.

Dream was shaking absolutely horribly. His hands were bloodied to the point where it's almost too gruesome to look at, his breaths irregular and short. Karl didn't even bother getting out the first-aid kit knowing Dream isn't gonna make use of it. Instead, Karl handed him a stray cloth to at least help stop the bleeding.

"The files weren't on the ship," Wilbur said. "How do you know that, Sapnap?"

"Davenport's weapons guy," Sapnap replied. "He's a friend. We-" Sapnap could feel both Karl and Quackity's eyes on him.

It didn't miss Quackity's vision when Sapnap pushed up his sleeve to hide the holes on his clothes from Karl's sight.

"We pretended to fight so that people didn't know that he told me where to go," Sapnap explained shortly. "I sent the info to Ponk. He should be sending in the address over to our GPS right now."

There was a little ding, both on the screen located on the dash of the car, and the one that was in front of Karl. Westbury Square shopping center, southwest Houston near Meyerland. The car turned immediately following the new directions.

"And-" Eret hesitated, looking at a very broken Dream. "And George?" They asked.

"We'll see," Sapnap shrugged, glancing pitifully at Dream.

The drive over was silent and it took more than a while for Dream to finally reboot his brain and start moving, wrapping the cloth over his fist and begrudgingly letting Sapnap bring out the first-

aid kit.

It was a really botched job of trying to put gauze over his torn-up flesh, but some part of Dream didn't want it to be fixed. Almost like he wanted to punish himself. Seems like he was already thinking about the worst-case scenarios and blamed himself for it, regardless of how true or maybe untrue that might be.

Their van was the only one that arrived in the abandoned shopping center, Fundy's van having gone back to their warehouse to meet Ponk and recuperate. Quackity pulled over closest to the only shop in the immediate area that didn't have boarded-up doors and windows.

The group very quickly made their way inside, their feet stomping harshly against the wooden board that made up the floor. It was the urgency of their steps that made the most noise, creaking as they filtered into the shop.

"That's not-" Dream exhaled, his eyes fixated to a spot on the ground.

Not really a spot, more so, a large pool of blood that was beginning to dry up.

"That's a liter," Eret gulped. "Maybe almost two liters of blood?"

Dream gulped, taking a step forward despite his knees getting weak and shaky. He was going to crouch closer to inspect when they heard footsteps. The entire group froze, listening to the uniform rhythm that grew louder and louder, the creaking floorboard that followed.

A tall brunet man stepped through the doorframe that leads to the back, and suddenly all their weapons were drawn.

"Woah, woah," The man yelled, his hands quickly thrown up in the air. "Don't shoot, don't shoot."

Dream looked up, his guns still drawn as he stepped over the pool of blood and walked closer to the man.

"Put your guns down," Sapnap was quick to jump into the situation, running until he fell next to

Dream, holding his arm out in front of Dream's chest to physically stop him. "Don't shoot."

"You-" Dream started.

"I'm a doctor," The man interjected. "I'm a doctor," He repeated, his eyes still trained on Dream's gun. "I have your files-" He rummaged through his pockets, though at this the group got back on alert and raised all their guns to point towards the man again.

"Watch it, watch it," Quackity barked.

"I'm just getting you the flash drive," The man replied, his hands now frozen in his pocket as he feared to move. "Can I?"

"Slowly," Wilbur nodded.

The man moved, going to find the little flash drive, and pulled it out of his pants. He handed the little plastic that has caused so much grieve in the past maybe 12 hours to Sapnap, who immediately tossed it over to Wilbur. Wilbur and Eret did a quick inspection, before handing it to Karl to plug into the van computer to check.

"If you can put down the guns, that'd be great," The man requested.

"Put your guns away," Sapnap said. "Now."

And thankfully the people listened.

"I also have your friend," The man continued. "He's a little fragile, in a bit of a critical condition, he's out bac-"

Dream took off before the sentence even finished. There was no saying if he knew how to navigate through the abandoned shop, though nothing was going to stop him from finding George and he wasn't going to wait another minute.

"How are you-" Eret started to ask. "How are you here? Why are you here, and how did you get our files?"

"I was called to help," The man replied. "Texted, really. And I come when I'm needed."

"George called you?" Wilbur asked.

"No," He shook his head. "Puffy did."

"Puffy?" Quackity exclaimed. "Our Puffy? Herobrine's Puffy?"

"I didn't even know Puffy knew you," Sapnap muttered softly. "It's nice to see you again."

"Long time no see, Sapnap," The man replied

"Again?" Karl questioned. "You know him? Who is he? Who are you?"

The rapid-fire questions coming from Karl were somewhat common, and though Sapnap usually finds this endearing, this time he wasn't so eager to answer. Not by Karl's fault anyway, but just by the answer.

"This is-" Sapnap replied hesitantly. "This is Foolish."

"Hi everyone," Foolish greeted kindly. "Nice to meet you."

"Punz's brother," Sapnap finished.

Chapter End Notes

note: without too many spoilers, i am perfectly aware of quackity's boundaries, this is not that kind of story (take that as you might for speculations)

so we got two new characters this chapter. meet Ponk and Foolish, how are we feeling?

I have plotted chapter 11, hopefully it will be done asap.

until then, comments and kudos are much appreciated !!

Sub to user if you'd like to get updates for when i post new fics (other fics) in the future. Sub to this fic though i think a lot of people already are !!

follow me on [twitter](#) !

Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

... hi

yeaaaaah so

11k words for chapter 11

im sure you don't wanna read this note and you'd rather just jump into the story so i won't say much

off you go, enjoy !!

ps. thanks for coming back ;)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Not up yet?"

"No. He- He lost a lot of blood."

"Right. I'm gonna go get some coffee, you sure you don't want anything? Breakfast bagel?"

"I'm good, Karl, thanks."

"Come on Dream, you must be some kind of starving."

"I'm alright, I promise."

"Sapnap's gonna kill me, but okay. Get some sleep if you can, okay?"

"Okay."

"And he's finally out."

"Sapnap, not too loud."

"Dream's out like a light Bad, he hasn't slept in days."

"Pass me that blanket, he looks cold."

"Catch."

"He still hasn't eaten anything though. At this point, I'm contemplating on just forcing a feeding tube down his throat."

"The hospital would be the proper place to do it. I'm sure Foolish might consider it."

"Have you talked to him?"

"Not much he can say right now. George should be fine though. Foolish doesn't know why he isn't waking up."

"Yeah, okay."

"Sorry, I didn't-"

"No, no, my bad."

"No, sorry, I didn't mean to startle you. I thought no one was in the room."

"I'm just watching him. Please, come in, you're the doctor, right?"

"Yeah, just some routine checks. I won't take long."

"Oh please, it's literally your job."

"I just thought the bunch of them left earlier."

"They left to take Dream back before he makes this room a second home. Some of them left to get dinner so I volunteered to watch."

"That's nice of you."

"He's a friend."

"Really?"

"Yeah. Why?"

"You just don't look- You're not like the rest of them. Most of them have guns. You don't look like you work with them."

"I'm a Professor of Computer Science so no, I don't. Not really, anyway."

"And still you're friends with someone whose job gets them shot and in a hospital bed."

"Life works in mysterious ways."

"I'm Noah, by the way. Foolish, they call me."

"Hi. I'm Ponk. Nice to meet you, Dr. Foolish."

"Do you think if I sing really, really loud he'll wake up?"

"Tommy, why would think that would ever work?"

"He hates it when I sing really loud, Ranboo. Why wouldn't it work?"

"It's true, you're pretty bad at it."

"Tomm-"

"Ah!"

"Tommy, don't throw things at Tubbo! What even is that? Is that the tray that holds the IV bags?"

"You bitch."

"Hey. Quiet, all of you."

"Skeppy, Tub-"

"Leave George alone, alright? Go get some lunch."

"Fine."

"I don't like it."

"You don't have to like it, Eret. George would've died if we hadn't gone to the hospital."

"Well, he's fine now. Let's move him."

"You genuinely want Dream in your bad corner right now?"

"I wish Dream wasn't in any corner right now, to be honest with you. He glares too much and I'm a bit scared."

"We did fuck him over."

"No, we didn't. George agreed-"

"George in his own volition wouldn't have done it, and you know that."

"God. Anyone else. George's soulmate could've been literally anyone else."

"But it's not. And honestly, we're lucky it's not."

"I'm not gonna accuse you of anything, but it's starting to feel like you're in a coma to avoid talking to me."

"Bad joke? Thought so."

"Look, I don't- I don't even know what to say. Okay? You've been out for three days, but Foolish got to you on time and we pumped you with a lot of blood, and you should be fine now, you should be. I've gotten shot in the gut and woke up faster than you."

"Okay, not the time for flexing, but seriously. George. Goggles? Remember, I used to call you Goggles? I don't know if you hated that, I certainly did. Maybe that'll annoy you enough to wake up and talk to me."

"I know I was the one who said never to talk to me again but I-"

"Not like this. I didn't mean it like this, I take it back. If you wake up- When. When you wake up, we can talk."

"Please wake up and we can talk."

"George, please."

The light was far too bright when George finally woke up. Of course, he didn't register it as light. To be quite honest, George didn't register it as anything. He was just immediately blinded even

before he could open his eyes.

It was disorienting, to say the least.

He was confused, he was dealing with throbbing in every corner of his head. There was persistent stinging pain in his body, all from his leg to his shoulder and his back. Something was strapped against his face, a rubber band of sorts pulled and dug into his cheeks, something that he had every instinct to pull off from his face almost immediately.

When George was able to blink without his eyes rolling back in pain, he tried to tilt his head down and look around. He felt a little pinch in his right hand which he brought to his face and stared down at an IV line. Then it all started to make sense.

The weird sheets that he was feeling under his body, the weirdly white lights, the glass doors that were open because he could hear the noise in the hallway, but also covered by a weirdly patterned curtain.

Oh god, George hated the hospital.

So George struggled, bringing his left hand up to his face to pull the oxygen mask off of his face before going over to reach for his IV line. He was already swinging his legs off the side of the hospital bed when he fell forward and knocked over a bunch of shit that was on the table beside him.

"Hey, hey, hey!" A very familiar voice rang from the hallway and within seconds the curtains were flung open and a man came running in.

George didn't have time to see who it was that ran in, his main focus was to run out. He didn't like hospitals. Hospitals meant doctors, and that meant records and the police, and there's a very clear pipeline there that will be unbelievably unhelpful when you're in George's line of work.

He thinks maybe some street kid or teenagers were trying to hide and do something dubious in an abandoned building and found him half dead and called 911. Oh yeah, that whole warehouse shooting thing, all of that was starting to come back in all of its glorious detail.

"Hey, don't-" Another voice called out as they entered the room. "Don't pull it out, don't-"

And just before George's shaky fingers gathered the strength to pull out his IV line, a hand clasped over it firmly and stopped him. That was when George finally looked up. Maybe he should've paid attention to who ran into his room.

It was a pair of green eyes. Ones so familiar, George could've sworn he'd been dreaming about it this entire time he was sleeping. Of course, it wasn't exactly green, he can't exactly see green, but deep down, George knew. At least that's what he saw in his dreams.

"You're okay," Dream assured him. "You're okay."

"I uhm-" George was panting, still trying to catch his breath while at the same time trying to press down the throbbing pain shooting up his leg.

"Let's get you back into bed," Dream said, though without waiting for George's reply he's already picking up George's legs off the floor, his other arm moving to guide George's and help him shift back into bed.

An unfamiliar face, though carrying a weirdly familiar voice, came and stood by his bedside as Dream helped him get situated.

"What is it with you people?" The man in the white coat nagged. "It's like your first instinct is always to pull the IV line out of your arm. Do you know how hard I had to work to find a vein on your right hand because *Dream insists* your left is your trigger hand and he didn't want it to hurt?"

George looked up to be faced with Dream's cheeks slightly darkening into a deep blush and his absolute refusal of eye contact. It was at this point where the both of them were hyper-aware about how close they were and how Dream's hands were still holding onto George.

So Dream took a step back, his warm hands slowly removing themselves from George causing George to shiver slightly.

"Your doctor," Dream introduced awkwardly, coughing to clear his throat. "Foolish, by the way."

"Foolish?" George repeated slowly.

"Yeah," Foolish replied as he bent down and inspected George's hand. "I failed my medical Board's exams like 17 times, I'm a bit dumb," He muttered as his hand reached out to a little tray next to the bed to grab a roll of medical tape so that he could secure George's IV line that has gotten loose from the trashing.

George only sat silent, blinking hesitantly both from the overall confusion and awkwardness. He tried to look at Dream, or at least he wanted to, for some kind of reassurance, or some comfort, some answers. But Dream wasn't looking back. A bit selfish, George supposed, that George thought all his sins would've been forgiven just because he got shot a few times.

"Alright, that's a bad joke," Foolish grimaced as he added two layers of tape onto George's arm. "Tough crowd, tough crowd," He grinned nervously, looking up at George, who only then finally took his gaze off of Dream. "I'm a perfectly capable doctor, I promise. I only failed o-chem once freshman year, but that was because I got food poisoning the night before the final ex-"

"Foolish, do you mind?" Dream suddenly cleared his throat.

His voice was stiff. It wasn't cold, it wasn't sharp, it was just stiff. Like when you're talking to a manager from a phone service company, or when you're trying to file a complaint to your kid's principal but also doesn't want your kid to be expelled.

Foolish got the hint pretty quick, nodding before exiting the room. The silence was uncomfortable. Dream was standing there, still unable to fully look at George. And George was looking at him. George had a lot to say.

"Did he- did he give you the file?" George finally spoke. "I had it on me when I-"

"Yeah, yeah, we got it back," Dream replied. "George, listen I-"

"George!" Tommy yelled, running into the room. "You're awake."

"You really scared us there," Ranboo said, not far behind Tommy.

"Don't disappear on people like that, it's rude," Tubbo told him.

"Yeah, and if you're trying to get yourself killed, maybe tell us first," Wilbur said snidely.

There was a sudden surge of people in his room, and George wanted nothing else than for all of them to leave. Instead, he watched as Dream took a few steps back and away, allowing other people to crowd over George's bed.

"It was-" George muttered. "-stupid, I know,"

"What even happened?" Eret asked.

"Nothing, I just-" George said, his eyes flickering towards Dream, who was standing silently at the corner of the room. "Did you get the file? They never took the file, at least I never-"

"We have the file," Dream answered, his voice reassuring. "Ponk is working on it right now."

"You got Ponk?" George asked, sitting up too quickly, forgetting that he'd just been injured and winced at the stinging pain. "What did he-"

"Careful," Dream almost seemed like he was going to surge forward and forcibly put George back into bed. George spared him a grateful look before Wilbur caught the look they shared.

"Foolish gave us the flash drive," Ranboo said to George. "He said you told him to keep it safe, someone was going to come for it."

"Well, I-" George shook his head. "Honestly I barely remembered anything."

"He said you threatened to shoot him if he took you to the hospital," Sapnap chimed in, joining the ever-growing party in George's room.

"I don't like hospitals," George told him. Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo shake their head in agreement. "I'm assuming he took me anyway seeing as how I'm alive?"

"He didn't," Dream said. "You were in that warehouse for a whole day, bleeding out. He was so scared to take you but he managed to keep you alive until we found you," He finally looked and made eye contact with George. "We took you to the hospital."

By *we* Dream means himself. By the sharp tone of his voice, the way his hands were gripping his arms tighter than humanly possible, the fact that he couldn't look away from George like he's scared George would disappear, but also couldn't look at him longer than just a few second. He took note, however, of the gauze and bandages wrapped around his knuckles.

By *we*, George knew Dream was the one who took him to the hospital. Did whatever he had to so that George would stay alive. He didn't know how Dream managed to pull it off, how he's still in a hospital bed getting care, how a bunch of known criminals are in his room right now, himself included in that list, without a swarm of police running in and shooting them down on sight.

He didn't know the details of what happened, but he knew it happened. And his heartbeat thumped against his ribcage a little faster, though it ached with guilt at the same time.

"Well, okay, I-" George shook his head, trying to get himself back into focus and onto the topic of conversation, when his eyes slowly trailed away and his attention was caught on the TV where the newscast was running. "What is that?"

The whole room turned around and looked at the TV, collectively having forgotten that they'd left the TV in George's room running. It was a news report doing an update on an event that they're very familiar with, it's almost like they're there.

"He-" George gulped, staring at Galecki's face talking in an interview with the reporter. The volume was low, hardly anyone could hear what he was saying though George didn't want to hear his voice regardless. It was glaring and pretty obvious, George noticed, that he was not in a good shape. From the way, his eyes socket was practically caved in, his lip split, stitches on his cheekbones, butterfly bandages on his forehead. "He was there," His eyes flickered up to Dream then quickly down to his bandaged-up knuckles. "He's your boss, right?"

Dream dropped his hands, looked down to the ground, and walked out of George's room without another second.

"Can you guys clear the room?" Wilbur said, his tone much more commanding than requesting, his glaring gaze told Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo to leave immediately. Wilbur looked at Sapnap, the intention of it was the same, but the result was most certainly not. Sapnap wasn't leaving this conversation, and Wilbur and Eret accepted that pretty quickly.

"What the hell were you thinking?" Eret said. "This isn't what we planned, this isn't what we talked abo-"

"We didn't talk about anything," George said sternly. "You talk, I listen. That is what happened. That has always been what happens."

"We agreed-" Eret defended themselves.

"I didn't-" George said, his eyes glancing towards Sapnap, pleading almost. "Not about him."

"You wanna lie?" Eret's voice was low and threatening. "You can lie. You can lie to him, you can lie to all of them. You can tell them that you didn't want to betray Dream, that you had no idea what we were planning, and you had no choice. You can tell them that I made you do it, you can tell them anything you want to save yourself and save your relationship, but you *tell* me." He said darkly. "You tell me that you're going to stab us in the back and try to sabotage our plans, steal what we worked hard for, what we risked our lives and freedom for. You tell *me*."

Sapnap was starting to feel that maybe he shouldn't have stayed in the room for the conversation. The tension was palpable, even Wilbur was visibly stiff, both of them glancing between George and Eret, both of which had glares strong enough to melt through metal.

"Then at least I can shoot you myself," Eret said before walking out of the room.

Sapnap and Wilbur both inhaled sharply, unsure of what to do or what to say. Wilbur cleared his throat before looking George in the eye.

"You're lucky you didn't die," Wilbur said. "Don't do that ever again."

And with that, he left the room.

"Your friends aren't the type to bring flowers, balloons, and 'Get Well Soon!' cards are they?" Sapnap chuckled awkwardly.

"Most people in my line of work don't go to the hospital," George muttered lowly, slowly moving his shoulder around, trying to test out his mobility after the injury. "Hell, they don't even *get well*, let alone *soon*."

"Well, you would've gotten well *sooner* if you hadn't threatened your doctor's life," Sapnap mumbled, pulling up a chair and dragging it slowly to George's bedside before sitting down. "You blood practically painted that floor, you were like a Gusher."

"A-" George furrowed his eyebrows and turned to look at Sapnap skeptically. "A Gusher?"

"You know," Sapnap said cheekily. "The little candy thing that you-" He made a little squeezing gesture between his two fingers and George scoffed.

"I would've expected something like that comment from Ranboo, but not you," George hummed.

"A little dark humor just before things go to hell in a handbasket," Sapnap said. "Plus I've had a lot of time to think about *you-getting-shot* jokes in the three days you were out."

"Thre-" George stammered.

"Sniper gets sniped," Sapnap recited. "How the turntables, instead of Goggles, I was gonna call you Kevlar, because you need to wear it. Or, target practice, that one's kind of a lot but-"

"Three?" George exclaimed loudly, finally getting Sapnap's attention back. "I was out for three days?"

"Three days after we found you, so that's technically four," Sapnap explained.

"I- What-" George's breathing was getting faster, as he frantically looked around the room though not particularly looking for anything. "What happened?"

"I don't know, you tell me, George," Sapnap sat back in his chair and crossed his arm. "What happened to you?"

"I think you need to answer first, I'm not the one in the News," George gestured to the TV.

"Eh, those are just reruns," Sapnap waved it off, though George continued to watch the report.

"Are those-" George's finger was raised and pointed at the screen, his face contorted to a look of confusion and maybe just a little bit of amusement. "Do those guns spell out *'fuck'*?"

Sapnap turned his attention to the TV and chuckled. It was indeed a rerun of the helicopter footage from when he and the group ambushed Davenport's illegal weapons cargo at the dock in Galveston Bay. He didn't think much of it at the time due to the running, and stopping Dream from killing someone live on TV, and not wanting to meet law enforcement when hanging out with a bunch of criminals. But apparently, Tommy had a bunch of free time in his hands when he was told to display out all of the guns on the docks to show press and decided to have a little fun.

"Tommy," Was all Sapnap had to say as an explanation.

"What happened?" George asked again.

"Oh Somalia," Sapnap was the worst at explaining things and George was beginning to find that out.

"What's Somalia?" George looked utterly confused.

"Weapons," A new voice chimed in and George looked up to see Quackity and Karl at his doorway. "Heard you were up, finally," Quackity said.

"Glad you're doing okay," Karl said, walking in and immediately leaning on edge of George's bed. "Scared us there, with the whole not-waking-up thing," He gave George a little smile. "Scared Dream a whole lot."

"Where is-" George asked. "Where is he? I wanted to talk to him, if- if that's alright?"

"Told him to get a shower," Quackity nudged his head towards the door. "Don't tell him I told you, but he hasn't showered in like 4 days, so he's stinky."

"Plus, he would do well with a little nap," Karl sighed, gently patting George's leg. "Foolish says the damage isn't too bad, but you'll need to be off the leg and wear a sling, so you can't work."

"You say that as if my work is a day-to-day 9-to-5," George chuckled.

"That's what the doctor says," Karl raised his hands.

"So what about weapons and Somalia again?" George was very good at returning the conversation to the initial topic.

"Remember when we thought we stopped Davenport from manufacturing Techno's guns because we sent Brouillard to the hospital and then prison?" Quackity said. George looked to Sapnap and Karl who only shook his head. "Turns out finding another person to run the manufacturing facility and another person to give them other gun designs, isn't that hard."

"Us ruining their transaction and sending their people to prison was barely a hiccup," Karl sneered. "Like weeds, they just keep replacing themselves."

"And him?" George asked.

"Who's him?" Karl said.

"Your boss," George stated, before turning to Sapnap and Quackity. "Or yours, I guess."

"Our-" Quackity's voice faltered off as he tried to figure things out. "How do you know about Galecki? You weren't at the dock with us, you weren't there for that."

"Well," George gestured to his shoulder and leg.

"You called him and he shot you," Sapnap scoffed. "Not surprised."

"Technically no," George explained. "I called Puffy, and Mr. J was the one who shot me."

"Puffy?" Sapnap exclaimed. "You called Puffy?"

"Puffy was the one you called?" Quackity repeated, trying to reassure his statement.

"Well I- Yeah," George nodded. "I was going to give-" He looked down, his cheeks turning a little crimson as he tried to hide his confession. "I thought if anyone were to take the files back, if anyone was going to protect Dream, it would be Puffy. They seemed close."

"They were," Sapnap said. "I don't think Dream knows you called Puffy."

"Though, that makes a lot more sense of how Puffy was the one who called Foolish," Quackity said.

"She was?" George sounded surprised.

"But if she's still with Galecki, that means she knows-" Karl pondered.

"With Galecki? Is she in prison?" George's eyes widened in surprise.

"No, she's not in prison," Sapnap replied. "Why would she be in prison?"

"Is Galecki not in prison? The whole guns-from-Somalia thing was on the news," George gestured vaguely at the TV.

"Nope, that snake got his way out of it again," Quackity sneered. "It's surprising how much being charming and a smart talker will get you out of trouble."

"The police have other names on those arrest warrants they have floating out there," Karl said.

"No," George gasped quietly, while Sapnap and Quackity raised their hands like a kid getting called into the principal's office. "No."

"Oh yeah, we're all in hiding right now," Quackity laughed darkly.

"And you took me to the hospital, this is like the breeding ground for law enforcement, we're open and exposed-" George rambled off, halfway to getting off his bed before getting pushed back by all three of the people in his room.

"We have it handled," Sapnap said. "Don't worry about the police, we have it covered."

"Plus, you were dying," Karl said. "There wasn't much of a choice."

"You could've just let me-" George sighed

"Die?" Sapnap interjected. "Yeah, Eret might've wanted to shoot you herself, but we don't do that over here, not to our friends."

George gulped, the lasting guilt sat heavily on his chest. It felt maybe a fraction better, to keep chanting in his head *for the greater good, for the greater good*, but how many people's lives are permanently changed or permanently ruined from this Hail Mary plot Eret came up with when he was locked up in isolation in a maximum-security detention center named after the fabled magical vault that locked away all of the world's evils.

Nothing good ever comes out of Pandora's Vault, not the people nor the plans.

"So who's-" George hesitated to ask, looking at Sapnap nervously feeling suddenly nervous. "Marakova's replacement. The guns from Somalia," George felt the room tense up and went colder than usual. "It's your friend, isn't it? The one from the diner."

"I don't know what you're talking about," Sapnap cleared his throat.

"Okay," George wasn't one to pester.

George was quick to figure out that this was probably not a topic that they wanted to be talked about or discussed. It would annoy the shit out of George if people tried to talk about things to him that he didn't wanna talk about, so the least he could do is show the same respect to Sapnap. Ironically, against all his training and instincts, the only thing he wants to do right now is talk about everything.

George never felt like such a- He doesn't even know what to call himself, that's how frustrating it is. A world-class sniper, almost taken out of the game, out for three-four days, for a stupid mistake that he made willingly. The world was possibly ending, at least that's how Eret had put it, and all he wanted to do was talk to people about how upset he was, how guilty he felt. He wanted to apologize, in all the ways that he could think of. He wanted to explain himself. All he wanted to do was talk.

George wanted to talk to Dream.

But that wasn't in the cards.

"So did the doctor call you? Did you-" George coughed a little only for Karl to quickly jump to his rescue and give him a glass of water. "How did you find me?"

"He got your location from-" Quackity said but didn't finish his sentence.

"A friend," Karl was the one who finished. "Got Ponk to decrypt it, got to you as fast as we could, and Foolish was already there. Stole some blood from the bank for you, kept you alive even though you were practically as pale as a sick Victorian child."

"You got Ponk," George sighed softly. "He has the files. So what do we know about Project Overworld?"

"You know, maybe you should take a break," Quackity said.

"I'm fine, I've been sleeping for 4 days, I don't think I need more rest," George told him. "Come on, I know I fucked up, but we're still in the middle of this fight."

"Maybe he should get briefed," Sapnap said. "I'll get Bad and Ponk, and they'll fill you in on what's been happening and what we're planning."

Sapnap stood up and immediately walked out of the room, trying to find Ponk and Bad but without looking back, he could sense Quackity mutter out whatever half-baked excuse he could think about at that moment and followed Sapnap out of George's room.

"Not now Quackity," Sapnap warned even before Quackity could utter a single word.

"You have to talk to me at some point, we have to talk at *some* point," Quackity insisted.

"I said not now," Sapnap replied stubbornly. "We have to get Bad and Ponk, it's-"

"Another excuse, it's just another excuse," Quackity interrupted. "Because that's all you do. You make excuses after excuses, and you never want to talk about it or discuss-"

Sapnap rolled his eyes and huffed before turning around and grabbing Quackity by the wrist into the closest stairwell, slamming the door behind them to keep them and their highly private conversation from other people's ears.

"It's not an excuse," Sapnap said defensively. "George just woke up, and Karl has always been around, forgive me if I don't wanna talk about the status of my soulmate in front of my boyfriend," He was panting at the end of his sentence.

Quackity pulled his hand away from Sapnap's grip and stared at him intensely, eyebrows furrowed and trying to keep down his anger.

"Don't you think I know that?" Quackity spat. "If you'd just talk to me days ago, we could've had this done over with!"

Sapnap and Quackity stood there face to face, their breathing still heavy and short, both of them in an uncomfortable level of tension.

"You shot me," Quackity stated.

"I'm sorry," Sapnap apologized, though both of them knew it wasn't about the shooting statement.

"I know," Quackity replied.

"You're my best friend, Q, I would never want to go anywhere without you," Sapnap said. "I would die for you, I know you've gotten shot multiple times for me. I-"

"Do you love me?" Quackity asked.

There was a beat of silence. Actually, a few more than a beat. Sapnap could only swallow what felt like the biggest lump in his throat.

"I really like Karl," Quackity said.

Sapnap's eyes widened before looking more intensely down at Quackity, raising a single eyebrow in questioning.

"I think he's amazing, and he's good for you," Quackity said. "He's funny, he's nice, he's smart. He makes you happy, and I am so glad that you found him," Quackity smiled. "I like him for you," He repeated.

Sapnap gulped, his eyes tracking the ground guiltily, moving his body uncomfortable as he heard Quackity sigh.

"Sapnap, I'm not in love with you and I know you're not in love with me either," Quackity stated. "We'd be lying to each other if we said otherwise, I just needed you to talk to me. I am sorry too."

Sorry.

They both said it. It was simple enough to say and they both certainly felt it even though it wasn't easy to elaborate on what that feeling meant.

I'm sorry that you're not soulmates with the person you're in love with?

I'm sorry that I'm in love with someone else?

I'm sorry life isn't easy nor is it fair. And I'm sorry it feels like I'm making you choose. I'm sorry that our relationship just got infinitely more complicated. And I'm sorry that you're burdened with this secret, our secret. I'm sorry that you're hurt or that you might hurt someone else, and I'm sorry-

I'm sorry.

"What Karl doesn't know won't hurt him," Quackity said, holding his hand out. "I like him, Sapnap," He repeated.

"I like him too," Sapnap said timidly.

Sapnap inhaled a very sharp breath and held it for an unbelievably long time. It was almost like he forgot how to breathe. He looked down at Quackity's hand, his brain going through all the worst scenarios that could happen, will happen, flashes of Karl's face smiling at him, not even wanting to imagine what such a beautiful face would look like crying.

What Karl doesn't know won't hurt him.

Sapnap took Quackity's hand, shook it, before pulling him into a hug. Quackity was surprised at first, but it only took him a second to recover and wrap his arms tightly around Sapnap, chins tucked gently over each other's shoulder.

"I'm sorry," Sapnap said again.

"Me too," Quackity replied this time.

The words were genuine yet sat heavily on their chest as they pulled away, managed a smile at

each other before Sapnap opened the door out of the stairwell, letting them both out.

"There you guys are," Karl's cheerful voice shocked them both. "I've been looking for you. God, how hard can it be to go look for Bad?" He said teasingly.

"Sorry, there's a phone call-" Sapnap started.

"They found a missing file that was hidden behind a cabinet with the health insurance-" Quackity spoke on top of Sapnap.

"The manager thought the police was the spy-" Sapnap continued with his sentence and at this point, it was hard to listen to what either of them was saying.

"And so I told them to throw away the copier machine," Quackity finished.

Karl looked at them with furrowed eyebrows, knowing very well both of them were telling completely different stories that not to mention also complete and utter nonsense.

"Okay, be weird like that, it's fine," Karl mumbled playfully. "Anyway, Bad and Ponk are in George's room right now. Thought you might wanna join them for some talks."

"Right, thanks," Quackity replied curtly before walking away.

"Thanks, babe," Sapnap sighed, pressing a quick peck on Karl's cheek before walking off. But Karl was quick to catch his wrists and pull him back.

"Is everything okay?" Karl asked earnestly.

"Yeah," Sapnap answered as calmly as he could. "Everything is great, why wouldn't it be?"

"Well, I mean-" Karl shook his head. "Other than the fact that we're wanted by Interpol and the CIA and also the local police but also-" He listed off.

"Oh yeah, other than that, obviously," Sapnap shook his head chuckling.

"I don't know, you guys just look-" Karl glanced back at where Quackity just walked back into George's room. "Are you guys okay?"

"We're okay," Sapnap lied.

"Well, you don't look okay," Karl responded. "You know you can talk to me right? About anything you want."

"Yeah, I know that," Sapnap nodded, the guilt felt heavier in his chest than ever.

"I didn't pressure because I thought you might not want to talk about it but if it's about your friend Punz-" Karl said.

"Stop-" Sapnap snapped too quickly that it made Karl jump back so slightly. Sapnap inhaled a deep breath and took both of Karl's hands into his own, pulling it close to his chest. "Stop," He said again, a lot softer this time. "I appreciate you, and I know what you're trying to do, and I-"

The words felt difficult to say. Not because it was untrue, but because saying it now was unfair. Sapnap couldn't tell Karl that he loved him, that would not only be too quick but downright an asshole move.

"Thank you for being so caring," Sapnap smiled, placing yet another soft peck on Karl's forehead. "It's just things have been very tense, you know? I also have to take care of Dream, I mean, we didn't know if George was gonna wake up until today," He explained. "And we don't know how things are going to be going forward, and things are just complicated. So yeah, you're right, I'm a little worried, I'm a little nervous," He confessed.

"Oh, baby," Karl sighed, his hand gently caressing Sapnap's hair, arms resting on his shoulders.

"But," Sapnap said, his hand snaking down to Karl's back and pulled Karl's body against his. "I'm not worried anymore. Not when I have you."

"You're so corny," Karl giggled, his face blushing a faint pink.

"You love it," Sapnap grinned cheekily.

"I just want you to know that you're not alone," Karl nuzzled his face against Sapnap's neck. "I'm here for you if you want someone to listen and help, I'll understand."

"I know," Sapnap said, pressing a kiss against Karl's hair. "I know."

Just by the corner of his eye, he saw Quackity glance at them from inside George's room. Their eyes met not even for a second before looking away.

He couldn't begin to explain to you the melting pot of emotions in his chest right now.

"Maybe we should go," Sapnap cleared his throat. "God knows I hate briefings but we should probably be there for the conversation."

"Right," Karl was still gleaming, still smiling.

Sapnap took his hand and the two entered George's room hand in hand.

"A satellite?" George was sitting up, though the news alone had left him slouched forward, his face in his hands. "16 Billion dollars makes a whole lot of sense now."

"And planes," Bad chimed in.

"Yes, Bad," George sighed. "I remember about the planes. Good morning to me, I guess."

"Yeah, so now you know what would've happened had you given those files back to Herobrine," Quackity muttered.

"Got it, got it," George waves his hand lazily, his face all scrunched up as if the thought of his actions alone were enough to bring him pain. "This is starting to feel like that movie."

"That's what I said," Ponk and Sapnap said at the same time.

"Well, that's essentially how they planned on using it," Ponk said. "It's a giant superweapon."

"Multiple giant superweapons," Bad corrected.

"Yes, Bad," George said exasperatedly. "I got that."

"It's not great," Quackity mumbled.

"Okay, so what's the plan next?" George asked.

The room went down in awkward silence, looking at George with different levels of confusion.

"What's the plan?" George repeated his question.

"Uhm," Karl hummed. "Well-"

"You have a plan, yes?" George said. "I've been out for three days, you guys have done something during that time, right?"

"Wrong," Quackity chuckled nervously.

"You don't have a plan?" George's eyes bulged out accusatorily.

"*We* don't have a plan," Bad said and George covered his face with his hand.

"How have you not come up with a plan?" George demanded. "It's been three days."

"Precisely, and you were out for three days," Sapnap said. "Dying, for three days, to be exact."

"Hiding from multiple law enforcement agencies isn't a walk in the park either, especially when you can't run and you have to stay in one of the more exposed buildings in the city," Karl gestured around.

"It's round-the-clock surveillance," Ponk explained. "Following the news, watching security cameras, making sure that no one goes up to this floor, paying off security guards, throwing red herrings to the press-"

"Flirting with your doctor," Quackity said.

George looked up and raised his eyebrows confusingly.

"Not me," Quackity said. "Him," He nudged his head to Ponk who just about gave the most dramatic eye roll a single person has ever given.

"I have not been-" Ponk scoffed.

"Okay, well sometimes me too," Quackity confessed. "We all do it."

"What- what-" George was almost speechless. "What about Wilbur and Eret? Why didn't you just move me once I'm stable? To- to a warehouse, or a safe house. If my being in a public hospital is making you all unable to work-"

"Right, and who's gonna let them?" Sapnap chuckled.

George stopped in his tracks and gulped. It was like flashes of memories, foggy and distant, voices echoing in his head that made him wonder if he was maybe remembering something. Maybe he remembered.

"Wilbur and Eret didn't make any plans?" George said.

"I mean we've thought about it, talked about it," Bad explained. "But no drawing board, and we can't exactly bring a whole computer setup to an abandoned hospital floor."

"Right," George blinked.

"I did what I can, read what I can from a laptop," Ponk said. "You breaking into the Houston Herobrine facility and wiping most of the work that they have in their system delayed them a whole lot. Delayed them enough that we could safely worry about you not waking up for three days. But it also isn't the end of this fight."

"Most?" George said. "We used Dream's senior access code to make sure that it all gets wiped out. Everything. We self-destructed their machine."

"And you taught you how to do that?" Ponk asked curiously.

"An informant," George brushed off far too quickly. "Don't worry about it."

"Well your informant was wrong, or at the most, just misinformed and not as thorough as Herobrine is with their files," Ponk sighed.

"So you're saying we didn't erase all they have on Project Overworld?"

The sudden sound of Dream's voice from the door startled everyone, making them turn and jump in their spot. George felt his throat tighten up as he looked at Dream. It feels wrong to look at him with a cocktail of emotions swirling in his chest. But still, it almost felt like his mind had its own agenda, and noting bits and pieces about Dream was the best use of his time.

The slightly wet hair that he could only guess was from what Sapnap had told him was probably his first shower in three days. The dark green eyes, piercing and dull, though George knew he was the one who stole that light. Dream was leaning against the doorframe, wearing nothing but a simple t-shirt, probably the most casual look George has ever seen from him. No gun stashed at the back of his pants, no harnesses or holsters, no steel enforced boots. Life would be so simple if he

could- if they could enjoy some mundane mediocrity.

But life isn't simple when your life's work involves weapons and bad people that tell you to kill other bad people.

"No," Ponk said sympathetically. "Essentially what you did is take their cookbook, you didn't kill the chef."

"Why would you kill a chef?" Bad asked innocently.

"What I mean is," Ponk sighed. "You took their launch code, their perfected studies, their blueprints, drawings, and everything they've worked on, but you didn't take the people. You didn't take the knowledge."

"It's not impossible that some engineer would still have the blueprints to their ships backed up somewhere in his home laptop," Karl said slowly. "Or even if they don't it wouldn't take too long for them to recreate their work. At least not as long as their research the first time around."

"And when you took their weapons shipment, you took their eggs out of the fridge-" Ponk said.

"But you can just buy more eggs," Quackity sighed, rubbing his temples.

"You took my code back but that's something that they've seen, and some very gifted software developer could reverse engineer that in weeks if not days," With every word that he spoke, Ponk winced.

"Right, so we're back to square one," Dream said. "What we did was pointless."

George felt the metaphorical knife that was embedded in his metaphorical chest turn. He almost wished he'd gotten stabbed literally.

"No, no," Ponk corrected immediately. "No, we learned that their plans were, we delayed what they're about to do. We just have to-" Ponk's voice drifted off as he thought about what exactly it is that they should do.

"We have to get out of here," Eret's voice spoke.

Dream turned to see her standing right next to him. It was tense, it was always and had always been tense between them. The annoyed look in Dream's eyes was permanent, though his gaze flickered when he saw that Eret was talking to him and only him, her eyes leveling with his, spoke a thousand words. Dream watched as Wilbur and Tommy stood a bit farther behind Eret, waiting to hear about their next move.

"They're coming," The words that left Dream's lips were barely audible. Eret could only nod their head.

"George is awake now, we can go, we can leave," Eret stated. Unspoken was the tone that the deal had been completed, that Eret had kept their end of the deal.

"Get Ranboo to pull the ambulances down to the West garage exit, we'll evacuate now," Dream called back and Tommy nodded before running off.

"I'll get Skeppy and meet Ranboo downstairs," Bad said.

"I got the gurney," Sapnap yelled out, slipping out of the room, Bad closely behind him.

"I have to get the elevators and the doors," Karl said. "I'll slow them down."

"No, no, the police has a warrant for you, they don't have one for me," Ponk stated. "Karl, you get Foolish, I'll get the elevators."

"I'll get the stuff," Quackity wasn't too far behind Karl.

"You, Wilbur, Ranboo, Tubbo, Tommy, and Jack leave now, we'll be right behind you," Dream told Eret. "Skeppy's gonna trade spots with Ranboo, and you get out. We'll take George."

"Don't get caught," Eret warned.

"I wasn't born yesterday," Dream answered snippily.

"Well, you weren't a criminal until yesterday," Eret responded, though they already walked away before Dream could retort back. George heard Dream inhale sharply.

"Who's *they*?" George asked.

"Who do you think?" Dream sighed.

"I mean, I know, but which one?" George clarified.

"I didn't ask," Dream said, his head peeping out of George's room waiting for his teammates to come back. "My guess is the Interpol. They're the ones that have been up our ass so deep you'd think they're trying to do a colonoscopy."

"Ugh, Interpol," George grumbled, sitting up. "They're so annoying," His words were strangled as he groaned in pain. That was when Dream turned his attention back and looked at George, struggling to throw his legs off the side of the bed.

"What are you doing?" Dream rushed to his side.

"If Interpol is coming, they're coming for me, they're coming for you," George winced as he tried to support his body up with his arms, though the pressure shot pain through his shoulder. "We're leaving, right? Or were you going to leave me?"

George could've sworn he saw a twitch at the corner of Dream's lips but he would kill anyone who would accuse his heart of skipping a beat even if it may be true.

"That's why Sapnap's getting a gurney," Dream said.

"I'm injured not dead," George told him. "I can walk."

That was very quickly proven not true when George tried to take a step forward and stumbled right into Dream's arms. He swears this wasn't intentional.

"Right," Dream drawled.

"A little help wouldn't hurt, you ass," George grumbled, but Dream had already thrown one of George's arms over his shoulder and held him up by his waist before George finished his sentence.

"I wasn't the one who walked into a sketchy-looking warehouse in the middle of nowhere and managed to get myself shot in the leg by Davenport, broke a femur, and lost pints of blood," Dream nagged, helping George stand up.

"Shut up," George said, looked up, and met Dream's eyes, the two of them catching each other's eyes and finally sharing a soft little chuckle. ~~Oh wow.~~ "Now help me get my IV out," He requested as one of his arms was too busy holding himself up.

"Are you crazy? We're taking the IV," Dream said as he picked up the IV bag from the spot where it hung. "We're escaping but you were still in a coma until like two minutes ago."

"Alright fine, let's go," George grumbled.

Eret hadn't provided them with any sort of time frame. They didn't know if Interpol or whichever other law enforcement agency that was out for their neck would be crashing in through the elevator in 3 minutes or 3 hours. All they knew is that they had to get out of there.

Sapnap was running and rolling the stretched down the hallway, meeting them just outside of George's room.

"Get on the stretcher," Sapnap was panting when he got to them.

"I can walk, I don't need a stretcher," George said.

"You can limp and get dragged, that's a big difference," Dream said immediately pushing George towards the stretcher.

George would complain and protest, hell he would struggle and free himself if he could, but he was weak and in pain, and his stubbornness lost to Dream's sheer dedication. Plus, Dream had already lifted him off the ground and onto the stretcher, and at this point, arguing would've been more embarrassing.

"Bring him down, I'll catch up," Dream told Sapnap.

"Wait, wait, where are you-" George wanted to ask but Sapnap had already rolled him away and Dream jogged the other direction. "Where is he going?"

"Tying some loose ends," Sapnap explained as he rolled George into the elevator.

Once George was parked in the elevator, Sapnap stood at the door, his hand stretched out as if to stop the door from closing. He popped his head out and looked in either direction.

"What are you doing?" George asked puzzledly.

"Waiting," Sapnap said, checking his watch and tapping his foot impatiently.

"To get caught?" George snarked.

"You're not the center of the universe Gogy," Sapnap replied.

"Oh god, since when do *you* call me that," George groaned.

"Tommy," Sapnap grinned cheekily before looking down the hallway again. George heard footsteps getting closer rapidly, shoes squeaking against the floor. The lights turned off one by one as the floor got darker and darker. "Let's go, let's go. Hustle, hustle!" Sapnap yelled.

Not only was the situation unnecessarily tense due to the imminent threat of getting caught and thrown in jail for the rest of their living breathing life, which in George's personal and unpopular opinion, sounds a lot worse than dying from blood loss. The fact that the elevator has started

beeping due to the fact that Sapnap has been holding the door open longer than it's allowed isn't quite helping either.

"One," Sapnap called out as George watched Foolish run into the elevator. "Two," He counted as Quackity ran just behind him. "And three," He grinned brightly as Karl rushed in. Sapnap stepped away from the door, letting it close before letting out a big sigh. "And that's everyone."

"What about Dream?" George would normally refrain from questions that show his intentions too blatantly, but this was not the time to be coy. "Where is he?"

"He'll be fine," Sapnap replied. "He'll meet up at the garage."

George wanted to protest but had a feeling that it wouldn't be as effective as he'd hoped, so he kept his mouth shut and tried to not panic as the elevator reached the basement, Karl smiling at him as he sat on the side of George's bed.

"We've planned this," Karl assured him. "Everything will go according to plan, and it will be perfect."

"Don't jinx it Karlos," Quackity swatted his arm lightly.

"Sorry, sorry," Karl raised his hands.

When the door to the elevator opened, they were greeted by a long and gloomy-looking doorway. George would say that it looks like the dead live there as an insult only to find that it's simply true as his stretcher rolled past the hospital morgue. It was cold and it was dark, but even that didn't last too long.

Sapnap brought his hand up to his ear, letting Foolish and Quackity take over pushing George towards the exit. Sapnap inhaled sharply, his eyes meeting George's speaking a thousand words at once.

"They're here," Sapnap spoke.

Their steps got faster and soon they were sprinting out the exit.

George nearly fell off the stretcher when they suddenly rolled to a halt. An ambulance sat parked right in front of them, the back door had already been left open and ready to accept them. George could hear the sounds of tires screeching against the concrete, on-duty cars no doubt racing across the basement car park.

With one swift move, the stretcher and George along with it were loaded onto the back of the ambulance. Sapnap, Karl, Quackity, and Foolish made their way into the back, Bad and Skeppy sitting side by side at the front.

"We gotta go," Quackity mumbled. "They're coming, I can hear them."

"Where's Dream?" George said.

"He said to leave without him," Sapnap told him, starting to close the ambulance door.

"We're not leaving without Dream," George's tone didn't make it seem like it was negotiable.

"I can hear them," Foolish muttered nervously, and Karl made him sit deeper in the ambulance as to not be seen by whoever it may be that was chasing them.

"We have to go," Sapnap pressed more firmly the second time.

"I'm not leaving," George said.

He was already halfway out of the ambulance, Sapnap, and Quackity physically restraining him when the sound of the door opening echoed over the sound of tires spinning getting closer. George stopped struggling immediately, holding his breath as he watched the familiar tall blonde running towards them. It was just unfortunate that he could also see the bits of lights shining over the corner and the distance from multiple headlights that told them that their time has run out.

"Wait," Bad suddenly said just as Dream tried to step into the back of the ambulance. He opened his door and jumped out, his head looking around.

"Bad? Bad, where are you going?" Skeppy asked in an immediate panic.

"Leave now," Bad commanded.

"Bad, where are you going?" Dream asked.

"Don't worry about me, go now!" Bad said. "Quackity, take my spot, drive."

"We're not leaving without you," Quackity exclaimed.

"Quackity, you owe me. And Skeppy, muffins," Bad said.

"What the hell is *muffins*?" Sapnap exclaimed.

But it seems as though those things made sense, as both Skeppy and Quackity stopped arguing and prepared to leave. Quackity ran to the driver's seat and started the ambulance.

"Bad-" Skeppy called out.

"I know, I love you too," The answer was instinctive and habitual. Like he's probably said it a thousand times, and he probably had done it too. "I'll see you in the safe house."

Dream barely had time to open his mouth as he watched Bad run towards the direction where the cars were coming from. He took a turn and dived behind one of the concrete pillars, running towards who knows what, but Dream was now staring down at a black SUV driving directly towards them.

He felt George's hand on his back but before he could react, George had pulled the gun he had strapped to the back of his pants and pointed it and the oncoming car.

"Don't kill any-" George had already let out three shots before Dream could finish his sentence.

The bullets bit the SUV's front tires, forcing it to stop, though George didn't have a vantage point for the three following SUVs and couldn't take a shot. Sapnap banged on the partition of the ambulance and yelled.

"Go, now! Go!" Sapnap screamed.

Dream and Karl nearly fell out of the back of the ambulance because of the speed at which the car took off and the fact that the rear doors weren't secured and locked. They were barely even closed at all, but that was necessary because the other SUVs were slowly getting around the broken-down SUV.

It was a car chase, about the dozenth one they've had in the recent months. Quackity was a fantastic driver, to begin with, but somehow a better getaway driver than any of them expected. He went as fast as he could down lanes, drawing the most attention to themselves as they could trying to drive in the middle of the day through the most traffic-heavy center of the city with the emergency light on.

This sounds stupid. This sounds very stupid, but they have a plan. They have a plan, I promise.

The ambulance was two intersections down when they saw the SUV starting to catch up to them.

"They're Interpol, you're right," George mumbled.

"How do you know?" Dream asked.

"They've got very distinct cars," George told him. "It's stupid-looking."

Even at the tensest of times, the smallest hint of a grin on Dream's face gave George just enough bump in his chest to calm down. Not that George was a particularly nervous person, I mean, he's lived most of his life in the most high-stakes conditions. But the calm in the eye of the storm was something he could appreciate.

It was the fourth red light that Quackity had passed when he suddenly turned off the sirens, only to hear another ambulance driving just a few distances away from him, their lights flashing bright. A

third ambulance joined their getaway, the sirens loud enough to curb most of the cars on the street.

"That's Ranboo," Dream inhaled, watching as the ambulance drove behind theirs, covering them from the field of vision. "And that's Eret."

"Hold on," Quackity warned as the car surged forward more than before.

Quackity took a hard right turn, and the fleet continued to tail him. The route that he was taking was absolutely confusing but George didn't have time to ask. It was the second right turn when he suddenly saw a car crash into the side of one of the SUVs.

"What was that?" Foolish exclaimed.

"I-" Karl gasped, squinting out the back window. "That wasn't one of ours."

"One of ours?" George yelled, sitting up on the stretcher. "The plan was to run them off the road?" He turned to Dream furiously.

"Yea- No," Dream corrected himself quickly before he even finished his thoughts. "No, no," He repeated as convincingly as possible.

"Well-" Sapnap hummed and Dream was quick to smack his arm and shut him up.

"The plan was to have my team crash law enforcement out to the curb?" George's volume wasn't lowering even slightly. "Why didn't we just sneak out of the hospital?"

"The plan is working, it's fine," Dream said. "And there are a bunch of reasons why we couldn't sneak out of the hospital."

"Such as?" George demanded.

"Can you drive faster, Quackity?" Dream yelled, ignoring George's exasperated sigh.

The crash had proved to be somewhat successful much to George's dismay as they were now, and finally, clean from the people that were on their tails. Quackity pulled into a seemingly random alley where two normal-looking cars with tinted windows parked waiting.

They may not be in active pursuit, but that doesn't mean that they weren't in a hurry to get away. That also doesn't mean that George was prepared for the way Dream slipped his arms under his back and his knees, and Dream carried him out of the ambulance and sat him in the back seat of the car. George could not tell you if the thumping on his chest and burning on his cheeks was because he was absolutely embarrassed or-

Something else. It was definitely something else.

It was less than a minute of transition. Quackity, Skeppy, and Foolish went into one car while Dream, Sapnap, George, and Karl went into the other. They drove out of the alley and abandoned their escape ride before anyone could report a stray ambulance at the back of their apartment building.

This hideout was a lot different than their usual ones, so much so that George was convinced Sapnap had driven them to the wrong place. Instead of the typical warehouses surrounded with metal shipping containers with non-descript pick-up trucks parked all around the vicinity, they were driving up towards a mansion.

It was old, it looked severely untended to based on the vines and plants starting to overrun the yard, but it was still a mansion. It was huge, with a rusty old gate that was already open as if it was waiting for them to drive into the courtyard. George wanted to ask, but he didn't know where to start.

"How did *we* end up getting here faster when *you* guys were driving in front of us?" Tommy taunted light-heartedly.

"We had to actually swap our cars, we didn't just steal an ambulance," Quackity gestured towards the white ambulance barely tucked away in the garage, Tubbo still in the front seat playing with the sirens.

"Let's get inside," Eret said impatiently, clapping his hands like an overworked kindergarten teacher. "The house is safe, but not let's not tempt fate, shall we."

It felt weird to George, to not have talked to Dream at all, not really a full and meaningful conversation since their big fight, and yet still know that he would be the one standing next to him when he needed help getting out of the car and walking up the front stairs to inside the house.

Slowly, the group filed into the house one by one after parking their cars away for it not to get caught if so happens a helicopter would be flying by.

"Two, four, six, eight-" Wilbur did a headcount of his audience as Dream helped George onto the couch. "We're missing someone."

"Well, Ponk is going to catch up right?" Fundy muttered, already calmly lounging in front of the newly lit fireplace.

"Not Ponk," Wilbur said, trying to catalog the ever-growing team.

"Bad," Sapnap answered. "He's- We left him at the hospital."

"Bad?" Eret exclaimed.

"Why would you leave Bad at the hospital?" Wilbur asked loudly.

"It's not like we chose to leave him," Karl said defensively. "He got out of the ambulance, and Interpol was coming, we didn't have time to go after him-"

"Not to mention, he pulled something on these guys," Dream said, gesturing to a very silent Skeppy and Quackity.

"You don't think I hate that we left him?" Turns out Skeppy was running on a very short fuse.

"What's *muffins*?" Sapnap asked.

"It's his-" Skeppy's head lowered, his eyes focused on the carpet like he was trying to distract himself from his worry. "It's *our* soulmate veto. We have to do what each other says when we pull the veto."

"And you?" Dream glanced towards Quackity, who looked equally as guilty but less about leaving Bad and more about how Skeppy was feeling.

"I owed him a no-questions-asked," Quackity explained. "I asked no questions."

"He'll be fine," George spoke up, causing the room to turn to him. "He- He looked and sounded like he had a plan, he's probably just four steps ahead of us. Bad will be fine."

Skeppy clenched his jaw but said nothing else.

"And what was that other car?" Jack asked. "The car that crashed into traffic."

"I don't know," Eret shook his head. "Wasn't any of us."

"Saved our asses though," Tubbo mumbled. "They would've caught up eventually, the medic car could only go so fast."

"So what is this place?" Foolish asked, looking at the vintage wallpapers, and spiderwebs at the corner of the room.

"It's my house," Eret said. "One of them, at least."

"And you don't think that Herobrine would check one of your own houses as a place for a hide-out?" Karl said. "I think that would be the first place that they would che-"

Karl's sentence was cut short by the sound of the doorknob turning. Everyone was immediately on high alert, George could count at least half a dozen weapons being drawn and aimed towards the front door. None of them had heard the gates open, then again, maybe they'd forgotten to close it, or maybe they were simply distracted in the middle of the discussion they were having. The door creaked slowly and George could point out three distinct clicks from three different guns being

cocked. He'd only wished that he had one in his own hands.

It took one second and one second alone for Skeppy to glimpse at the shoe stepping on the floorboards, making a creaking sound as the step was taken, and then he shouted.

"It's Bad, it's Bad," Skeppy exclaimed frantically, running towards the front door. "Don't shoot, don't shoot."

Bad was barely in the house when he turned and saw half a dozen barrels pointing at him and he instinctively held his hands up in the air. Conveniently, that allowed Skeppy to throw his arms around Bad and hug him.

"Down," Dream commanded, he himself placing his gun back on his belt. There were more than a few relieved sighs across the room.

"You idiot," Skeppy pulled away and started hitting Bad on his chest. "What was all of that? I can't believe you vetoed me to leave you! That's not what the soulmate veto is about, you can't *muffins* me to leave you like that, that's not allowed."

"Geppy-" Bad sighed softly.

"No, it's illegal," Skeppy continued to yell. "I was worried, we were all worried. I would've- What would happen to me if you got hurt and I left you? I would've-"

"Skep-" Bad called again, and this time Skeppy stopped talking.

No, not because he was done ranting, yelling, and scolding. Skeppy doesn't think he'll be done with that anytime soon. But it was because he finally took a good look at Bad and noticed the blood starting to dry from his forehead. Bad was lopsided, his right hand holding onto his left wrist, his skin starting to turn a little blue.

"You're hurt," Skeppy gasped, his voice laced with concern.

"Only cuts and bruises," Bad grinned. "That's what you get when you get into a car crash."

"That was you?" Sapnap said.

"*That was you?*" Skeppy yelled even louder, hitting Bad on the chest with his fists again.

"Ow, ow, Skeppy-" Bad yelped, walking backward to get out of Skeppy's wrath.

"Why would you do that?" Karl questioned.

"It worked," Bad said. "And to be fair, it wasn't entirely my idea. I saw someone, and that's why I ran away, I was going to talk to them, and it was like a whole thing-"

"Someone," Dream echoed. "Who's someone?"

"Yeah, about that-" Bad cleared his throat. "Ponk's also still in the car, by the way, his knee got banged up pretty bad when we crashed-"

"Got it," Foolish said, running out to help.

"So you ran to pick up Ponk and crash into the side of an Interpol SUV?" Wilbur said incredulously. "Ponk was going to catch up on his own time, he doesn't have people after him. You didn't need to run back for him."

"And why would you listen to Ponk's idea and crashed into the SUVs? He's not a criminal, he doesn't deal with law enforcement at all," Eret scolded.

"At least it worked, didn't it?" Bad muttered. "And that's not-" He sighed deeply.

"That's not what?" Skeppy asked.

"Ponk wasn't the one who told me to crash into the SUVs," Bad said, remaining as intentionally vague as he could possibly be. "He wasn't the one I was running to talk to either."

"Okay," Quackity's voice sounded wary. "So who is it?"

"A friend," Bad replied.

"A friend?" Dream repeated with the level of skepticism rivaling Eret's annoyance.

"Did you bring a stranger into our safe house? Into my house?" Eret muttered through gritted teeth. "It's hard enough to hide us when we're the size of a traveling circus. Did you bring a stranger-"

"They're not a stranger, not really-" Bad said defensively. "Look, it's complicated, okay?"

"Bad, you're really confusing right now, and frankly, you're kind of scaring me," Skeppy said, now a little more calmed down and has stopped hitting Bad. "Who are you talking about? Who did you bring here?"

"And where are they?" Karl said. "Are they also injured in the car?"

"No, it's-" Bad turned to Dream, their eyes looking directly at each other. "It's complicated."

There was a feeling in Dream's chest that he couldn't quite explain, though if he had to try, it felt closest to how you could feel if you were Wile E. Coyote in that Road Runners cartoon and it was seconds before the anvil dropped on you. You're not going to die, and in cartoon laws, it probably isn't that bad. But it was that feeling like you ran off the side of the cliff, but you would only fall if you looked down.

Dream was scared.

Dream does not want to look outside.

He was going to be fine. Secretly he knew that. There were a bunch of people that he could've guessed stood outside, but only one would make Bad give that look on his face. One alone that Bad knew would make Dream's heart fall heavy on his chest. He would be fine, there was a reason

she was here.

Dream wasn't moving, and it didn't look like he was going to. He didn't even flinch when George softly touched his arm.

Bad walked towards the door and waved somebody to come closer, come inside, though his eyes remained trained on to Dream, watching him closely like he was afraid to startle a wounded bird he'd found in the wilderness. That's because Dream currently looked like a wounded woodlands creature, despite everything about his strong and rugged field agent demeanor. Deep down, maybe there was a reason she called him her little duckling.

George was surprised when Dream squeezed his hand. Though by the lack of movement on his chest, George figured Dream had stopped breathing in the recent few minutes. His eyes were fixed towards the door, watching as a figure slowly came into their foyer and turned towards them.

"Hi," She said.

"Puffy."

Chapter End Notes

so my plan is that i'm going to alternate with first, do no harm. i'm like 2K words into chapter 3 for that. and then after that, i'm going to be posting chapter 12. I hope it won't be a 6 months hiatus or whatnot, and it really shouldn't be especially now that I'm not going ficweeks, all my energy and focus will be towards finishing my multichaps.

other than that, if you did come back for this story, thank you for waiting for me! thanks to everyone that continuously left wonderful and supportive messages, patiently waiting and coming back. I hope that i didn't disappoint you.

Until next time, comments, kudos, and user subs are much appreciated.

you can also follow me on [twitter](#) !

Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

merry christmas !!

won't be explaining much about anything (I'll do it at the end notes)

go enjoy the chapter and hope you like it. and if you see inconsistencies NO YOU DIDNT it has been a long time since I have written this please have mercy

ps. if you're a long time reader, thanks for coming back.

if you're a new time reader, god aren't you lucky you didn't sit through the almost 10 month long hiatus.

pps. seriously, thanks for coming back

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Puffy," The sound of her name left Dream's lips like a faint whisper drowned out by everything else happening around them.

Dream felt his chest tighten, instinctively taking a step that covered George in his entirety. There was an unexplainable silence that fell across the room that stilled until it was inevitably broken up by Bad clearing his throat.

"Before-" Bad clarified. "Before you guys start pointing your guns up again, she's-" Bad looked back at Puffy and tilted his head. "She's one of us. She's on our side."

"Yeah, we know," Eret said, finally putting his weapon away for good.

"You know?" Quackity mumbled questioningly. "What do you mean you know?"

"I take it Niki's talked to you?" Wilbur asked knowingly. "Where is she?"

"She's-" Puffy gestured with her thumb towards the general direction of the car outside, though her eyes never left Dream's frozen state. "She's still in the car."

"Niki," Sapnap continued. "Who's Niki?" He demanded.

"One of our undercover," Jack explained.

"I'm so confused," Karl muttered.

"You got George shot," The words felt surreal leaving Dream's mouth.

"I didn't kno-" Puffy took a step forward which made Dream flinch back.

"She didn't," George said at the same time, laying a soft hand on Dream's tense shoulder. "She wasn't the one that shot me."

"I didn't say that," Dream muttered.

"Look, I'm so-" Puffy's eyes glance up to meet George's who was already understandably nodding, before looking at Dream's still stoic look. "I'm so sorry."

It felt a little weird, and the room definitely knew it. Even if the rest of the world would not understand why Puffy was apologizing while looking at Dream and not George, George knew. George understood.

"Who's Niki?" Skeppy cleared his throat, asking again in an attempt to try and dissolve the tension in the room.

"She's uh-" Bad replied, nudging his head outside. "She's outside."

"Boys, go help Niki bring Ponk in," Eret cocked her head shortly and seconds later, Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo left the living room.

"What do you mean she's-" Dream cleared his throat, his eyes finally leaving Puffy's face. "What undercover?"

"She's been working with Herobrine for a while, you may have seen her a few times," Wilbur said proudly, smiling as he peeked out the window, waiting for her to walk up the stairs. Seconds later, Niki walked into the room, the others not far behind him.

"Wil! Eret!" The woman Dream could only presume to be Niki exclaimed cheerfully as she waved at them.

Very out of character for someone that works with some of the -if not- the most dangerous criminals on the planet.

"Yeah we've definitely seen her before," Sapnap muttered absentmindedly. "Where have we seen her before?"

Niki grinned a mixture of mischief and guilt, bouncing on her feet, looking at Wilbur and Eret as if waiting for their permission to be able to reveal her great work.

"You can tell them," Wilbur shrugged, his eyes carefully watching as Ponk is slowly carried in, and the last of their people are now safely in the house.

"I tried to poison you on the plane," Niki said.

"Poison?" Skeppy sputtered.

"What plane?" Quackity exclaimed.

"No, no," Jack interjected before the rest of the crowd could erupt into protests. "Just a few sleeping pills that you didn't bite. You know, when you were transporting Eret, just before we tried to break them out."

"Oh my god, the plane," Karl muttered.

"You're also-" Dream had a different sense of realization, his eyes flicked very swiftly toward Puffy

before trying to find George from the corner of his eyes. "You're Puffy's assistant. When we broke in."

"I've been Puffy's assistant for a few months, actually," Niki said. "That is why I've managed to talk to her-" She looked at Puffy kindly. "-and convince her about the holes within Herobrine."

"But not before George gets shot," Dream's voice was beyond icy that you could feel the room shiver.

"Dream-" George's hand gave Dream's shoulder a little squeeze.

"She didn't know," Niki said softly. "She-"

"Whatever," He interrupted coldly.

Dream didn't mean to be rude, and probably not to Niki who he's barely even met, but when a person wears his emotions on his sleeves, there isn't much you can do about it. By the looks of it, there isn't much that Puffy could do, or wants to do about it either, choosing rather look down at the ground as she's escorted away by Niki.

"Okay, I think everybody needs to cool off," Bad said awkwardly. "I'll get dinner started if anyone wants to help me."

"Sounds like a grand idea," Eret said. "We'll get the plans set up for a briefing after dinner."

"Dream, why don't you come and cook with us?" Skeppy invited.

"George, we need your opinions on the nesting points that we've placed around the target area," Wilbur requested.

There was a pause as people began to disperse around the house, leaving George and Dream still standing in the living room, very comfortably close to each other.

"I guess we-" George cleared his throat, taking a few steps away from Dream and towards the study where Eret and Wilbur had disappeared into. A little twinge of pain shot up his knee though and Dream immediately surged forward.

Dream caught George's hand yet again, and George could only give him a little embarrassed smile.

"I think you should rest," Dream said.

"I'll be sitting down in the study, I promise," George said playfully. "I'll see you at dinner?"

Dream didn't have a chance to answer as it seems like George isn't waiting for an answer either. All Dream could do was stand there and watch until George entirely disappeared into the study, the heavy oak door closing behind him. He paused, and regulated his breathing for the first time that day, letting his heart rate stabilize at a much healthier rate before walking into the kitchen.

"Give me the knife," Tubbo said. "Your wrists are looking blue, shouldn't you get that checked out by Foolish?"

"I don't know if I trust you with a knife," Bad hummed, looking at a very smiley-looking Tubbo. Skeppy had already picked up on what Tubbo had said though, wrapping ice cubes in a dish towel before handing it to Bad to compress his wrists as per the car crash he was just in. "Thanks, honey." He accepted graciously.

"I know how to cook old man, watch it," Tubbo replied, quickly snatching the blade off of the counter. "I'll cut the tomatoes."

"Everyone's good with just plain old chili and potatoes for dinner right?" Skeppy said. "We really weren't planning on having anything else on the menu."

"How many people are we feeding?" Karl asked, counting the number of people around the room. "Eret was right, we're a circus and a half," He sighed

"How is there even food in this pantry?" Sappnap pondered as he opened the cabinets and drawers. "Like Eret obviously doesn't live here, she's been in prison for the last however many years. Who's putting frozen ground beef in the freezer and unopened tubs of sour cream in the fridge?"

"Techno," Tommy answered.

"Techno," Quackity repeated skeptically. "Techno isn't even in Texas."

"Techno," Ranboo confirmed with a nod. "Currently the only one of our acquaintances that isn't in active pursuit. He knew someone, who knew someone, who owed a favor to someone's cousin's neighbor's English teacher's grandma who once cat-sit for a corner shopkeep, you know the deal."

"I really don't," Quackity assured him.

"He called in a favor and got people to deliver groceries to the house under full discretion," Tommy explained. "He wasn't gonna let us starve," He looked at Dream. "You maybe, but not us."

It was a very weird sensation in the room when Dream didn't reply or quip back. He took one of the high chairs on the bar and sat there quietly, watching as the rest of his team and the children move around the kitchen. Tommy seemed to understand the reason why Dream didn't joke around with him, though that doesn't mean he likes it.

Dream just sat there, watching them quietly with the occasional glance towards the study, and his not-so-successful attempt at eavesdropping into the study.

"Where'd you learn how to cook, Tubbo?" Bad was very good at making casual conversation.

"I used to be left alone a lot when I was a kid," Tubbo said very nonchalantly. "Had to learn pretty quick."

"Your mom, and dad-" Skeppy started.

"Nope," Tubbo shot it down pretty quickly. "Not my style," He joked.

"What does that mean?" Quackity said in a joking manner. "Parents aren't your style?"

The chopping sound coming from Tubbo's knife hitting the cutting board slowed down and eventually stopped, the young boy clearing his throat without looking up at Quackity.

"I'm done with these, where do you want them?" Tubbo moved on, seemingly ignoring Quackity's statement. "I also need to take a piss," He said light-heartedly before leaving the room almost immediately.

"Sorry," Quackity said into the silence just as Tubbo disappeared into the hallway. "I didn't-"

"It's okay, it's not your fault," Ranboo assured him. "You didn't know."

"I'm so sorry," Quackity repeated.

"I'll go check on him," Tommy gave Quackity a reassuring pat on his shoulder before leaving right after Tubbo.

"Parents aren't our style," Ranboo shrugged lightly, picking up after Tubbo, placing Tubbo's haphazardly chopped-up tomatoes into a bowl before handing it to Skeppy. "I've only ever known Techno to raise me, Jack and Fundy don't talk to theirs anymore, we all know Eret's whole spiel and title. Wilbur and Tommy-" He gave Dream a quick glance. "And somehow Tubbo still has the wors- We don't like talking about parents," He concluded.

"I'm glad you guys have- that you guys found each other," Skeppy said.

"I don't imagine it's very different for you guys," Ranboo raised an eyebrow. "Herobrine is very hush-hush, isn't it? I didn't think you'd be able to talk or see your families much."

"Christmas, Easter, Fourth of July," Karl shrugged.

"The occasional Thanksgiving if we're not on duty," Bad said. "But my mother thinks I'm an electrician."

"Lawyer," Quackity raised his hand.

"Librarian," Karl chuckled.

"Graphics designer," Skeppy said.

"Basketball coach," Sapnap chimed in.

"That's funny," Ranboo pointed at Sapnap. "That's really funny."

"Oh, shut up you little turd," Sapnap threw a stray towel at Ranboo before the kitchen burst into soft chuckles.

It didn't take long before Tubbo and Tommy came back. Tubbo looked normal like he was completely fine though, wrestling the cutting board and knife out of Ranboo's hands, claiming that Ranboo was doing it all wrong.

It's not that people haven't noticed that Dream hasn't chimed in or even moved at all in the last 15 minutes or so, and it's not that they didn't want to include him in the conversation. The room knew that Dream would rather deal with a whole different bag of issues, first and foremost is his failure to eavesdrop on the study.

It was sudden, the way Dream stood up and made his way to the study. His mother always taught him to be polite and knock before entering a room, she also told him to wait a few seconds and listen for a response. He did neither of those things when barging into the study.

Wilbur and Eret didn't even flinch.

"We should be involved in the planning," Dream declared his tone equal parts shaky and pissed off. "I don't know why my entire half of the team is outside making dinner."

Dream took a few seconds to gauge the situation in the room. Wilbur and Eret were standing in front of a blackboard, pieces of paper and photos were stuck up with thumbtacks, lines drawn between them with different colored chalk. Fundy was the one actually sitting behind the big wooden desk, furiously typing on his laptop, Jack next to him adjusting the broadcast on the TV showing the top view of a map, while George stood closely, pointing out locations to Puffy.

There was a little guilty look that George managed to give Dream knowing he was caught standing up when he promised to sit down, and at the same time, a fond but exasperated look from Dream, quickly changed to distaste when seeing him and Puffy.

"No offense Dream, you and your team are not exactly who people would ask for help when planning professional break-ins," Wilbur hummed under his breath, not even turning to look at him.

"We successfully broke into that casino in Vegas," Dream defended himself, walking to sit in the chair second closest to where George was standing.

"Only because we helped," Eret replied. "We did half of the work."

"And we did the other half, so maybe you're not so great after all, are you?" Dream said smugly. "Besides, I was the one who put you away for two whole years, if you remember?" He gave Eret a little scowl.

"Oh, I remember," Eret mused. "So sweet of you to break me out as well," She grinned sweetly.

"Let him join, he's probably useful," George's voice decided on the matter, as he sat on the chair next to Dream's.

"*Probably*," Dream mumbled as he saw George smile cheekily before putting his attention back to the map.

"Catch me up," Dream instructed.

"Well if you must know," Wilbur sighed. "The Herobrine database, more so the digital archives, are pinged across 4 offices in the United-"

"Yes, I know this," Dream interjected. "I actually worked at Herobrine if you must remember." Wilbur was at his last thread of patience, rolling his eyes before continuing.

"Seattle, San Diego, Portland, and-" Wilbur listed.

"Houston," Dream finished.

"Wrong!" Wilbur exclaimed cheerfully. "Miami," He stated.

"No, it's Houston." Dream said. "That's why we broke in last week, that's why we wiped the database."

"No, Dream-" Puffy piped up, before pausing as if to reconsider her decision to talk to him. A cold air fell across the room as no one knew what was going to happen next. But when Dream didn't sneer, scoff, or did anything generally tense, Puffy decided to continue. "Houston was the base of operations, ongoing projects, research, and development. Not exactly intel. The more discrete, incriminating, historical data- the same ones in the Archives- It's Miami."

"There's two different-" Dream's voice was failing to hide his frustration. "Sure," he waved his hand dismissively.

"Long story short, we're crashing all of them. All four bases, plus the Archives in North Carolina," Eret said.

"Why?" Dream asked.

It seemed like a stupid question, and in retrospect, it kinda was. Why else would they be crashing down the bases and the Archives if not to take down Herobrine as an institution? But how taking down all the bases would deconstruct a whole private agency that is intertwined with most of the world's government and politics? Dream could see the intention, though failed to have enough confidence in the execution and the success of the goal.

"Because in a world of locked rooms, the man with the key is king," Eret said dramatically.

"Are you just quoting Moriarty from Sherlock?" Fundy asked without skipping a beat.

"An agency like Herobrine has thousands of secrets- very dangerous secrets- and if we have those

secrets, if we take those secrets to keep or to destroy-" Wilbur shrugged. "They will be powerless, and they will have no leverage."

Wilbur whistled from a high tone to a low tone, his hand following a motion that looks like a plane flying down, before making crashing and exploding noises once his hand gets to a lower position, demonstrating the phrase '*crash and burn*' instead of saying it to Dream. Dream could only stare flatly at his theatrics.

"That's exactly what I said," Eret piped up.

"That is nothing like what you said," Dream replied, to which Eret scowled. "Okay, how do you propose we do that?"

"We're going to go split into 5 teams, each one of four groups focusing on one of the bases, and the last one raiding the Archives," George explained.

"And you're confident that this is enough to stop them? Herobrine?" Dream said.

"If we get the continuous stream of data and upload it to the internet-" Puffy mumbled.

"Why would we upload it to the internet?" It was unintentional, it wasn't like Dream had any control of his tone, but even he himself knew the question wasn't only laced with shock and confusion but unbelievably cold, almost like little icicles shot straight at Puffy. "Why?" He cleared his throat and made sure his tone was more acceptable.

"Well like we said, the plan was either to steal the information to keep as leverage or publish it on the internet," Jack said. "These people are leaning more towards the latter. It's personal."

"We don't want them to only lose their leverage and protection, we want to draw them out," Wilbur said. "And nothing's gonna piss 'em off more than having their dirty laundry all aired out."

"We like strategy but we're not gonna say no to a side of revenge," Eret smirked.

"Alright," Dream sighed. "Show me how you're going to divvy people up."

Puffy was the one who held the book, but along with her better judgment, decided that it was better to hand the list of names unsystematically scribbled and scratched out, moved around under different columns, to George, and have the British sniper be the person who hands it to Dream. It took him a few seconds to glance over the list before making a face.

"No," His tone was definite.

"It's still being workshopped, I know you have *opinions*," Wilbur said impatiently, grabbing the book out of Dream's hand.

"You're really just gonna separate them all?" Dream questioned.

"As much as it pains me to say it, you're all somewhat good field agents," Wilbur spoke, his eyes reading the list again, noting down the changes he ought to make. "We're going to need at least one of you at each location, and specifically Karl at the Archive. This plan won't work if you just want to do things with only your friends and won't play nice with others."

"I know I said that our little group is a lot of people, but we're not exactly enough to be split into 5 teams. We're not going to be able to break into these facilities, let alone- I don't know what you're planning to do still- get files, destroy them, upload them, with an army of what? 3 people?" Dream stated incredulously.

"It won't be an army of 3-4 people," George told him. "It'll be a little closer to 6 per team. We're recruiting, we already have some backup lined up, don't you worry. We just need to make sure that the groups are balanced and that there's enough of us to go around and take charge and make sure we're successful."

"And when is this happening? What's the timeline? What's the plan?" Dream continued to interrogate the group with a flood of questions.

"We're working on it," Eret hissed, their patience starting to run a little thin. "The plans aren't set yet, that's why we're still *talking* about it Dream."

"When should this be happening?" Dream rephrased his question. "Do we have a timeframe, a deadline? Davenport trying to do something? Is Herobrine trying to-"

"One week," Wilbur cut him off in the middle of his ramble. "We're not sure why, but we know something bad's happening in a week, so we need to blow them up before then."

"*Not sure why?*" Dream's voice was as skeptical as always. "Where did you hear this one-week deadline?"

"We've got inside sources," Eret was at a point of resignation in which he really could only answer Dream's questions instead of trying to fight them. "And you want to know who that inside source is, I'm guessing-" Eret continued before Dream could pipe up. Dream almost looked offended that he was being very predictable. "You'll know soon enough, he'll be here tomorrow."

"Another per-" Dream had begun to exclaim before Eret cut him off yet again.

"-son coming to the safe house, it's dangerous, it's risky, *blablabla*, we know. Anything you're about to say, we've already known," Eret sighed impatiently. "But we also know that we need people for the missions, as you've very helpfully pointed out earlier."

"Look Dream, you can be here and you can join in on the planning, but- and I know this must be incredibly difficult for you to understand and accept- we aren't complete buffoons," Wilbur rubbed his temple as he attempted to keep his tone steady. "But we also don't have time to plan if we also have to convince you that we aren't complete buffoons. So? Are you going to be helpful or am I going to have to kick you out?"

To say that the planning session went on smoothly without a single hitch would be a complete and utter lie. No matter how much anyone in that room wanted to keep going and continue to make progress on the ticking deadline, there was a collective sigh of relief when Bad knocked on the door to inform them that dinner was finally ready and that they should probably take a break.

Dinner was awkward.

It was very communal, there were far too many people in that house and it felt too much like a work retreat for it to be anything remotely normal. Though, their lives haven't been normal in the past few weeks.

Dream was a little thankful that the three little munchkins didn't feel any morsel of awkwardness and kept the room cohesive and chatty. Maybe he was, in fact, getting a little fond of the three kids.

It was a little too obvious though where the lines are drawn across the room.

Dream was, of course, sitting in silence at some dark little corner, being all moody and edgy. The other corner was occupied by Eret and Wilbur, in quiet discussion amongst each other. Puffy mostly kept herself away from the crowd, Dream feels partly guilty about that, though Niki made sure to keep her in the loop of things. Quackity is talking to Fundy and Jack, though it sounded closer to arguing.

It was funny, a little bit, the fact that watching Ponk and Foolish try to hide the fact that all they wanna do is talk to each other is giving Dream a little bit of joy. Almost like a parent would when watching their children try to hide their crush. He knew damn well Foolish did not want to be talking to Sapnap, and Sapnap didn't want to be talking to him either. Not when Karl is there, anyway.

There was a little bit of warmth in the Dream's chest as he watched the way Bad and Skeppy were making conversations with George. A little sign that told him that maybe, just maybe, things might turn out alright.

It didn't miss either of them, that they were stealing glances at each other. Every once in a while, George would turn from his conversation from whoever, only to find Dream, wherever he was situated in the room at that particular moment whether it was getting more food, or water, or trying to convince Tommy to get off the coffee table, and George would meet his eyes. A small smile on his face when he'd found him, before going back to his conversation.

Dream was less subtle about it, and Tommy teased him about as much when he practically stared at George the whole night. It wasn't like the way Karl and Sapnap were looking at each other, and not the way Ponk and Foolish were, all four of them starting at their person to sneak off or get their attention. No. Dream and George kept on finding each other only to keep a constant check that they were there.

They were not gone, they're still there.

An hour went into two, and though Eret and Wilbur were quick to retire, the rest of the people hung around and helped clean up and do the dishes. It was a bizarre dinner party, one that Dream couldn't say he would like to be a part of again, though can't say that he necessarily hated every single moment of it.

There should have been another meeting, or rather, the continuation of the previous planning meeting in the study to prepare for the debriefing after dinner but honestly, it had been a long day and everyone was spent. Neither Dream nor Wilbur and Eret were too keen to have a series of long and boring, and very passive-aggressive conversations after dinner anyway, regardless of how necessary it may be. That could be a tomorrow problem.

It was a big house, and Dream was very impressed. He knew the Prodigal Son of Herobrine was rich, but he never knew just how rich. He could guess, by the private planes, the special treatment in Pandora, and just about everything regarding Eret's person, just how rich they are. Still, he

couldn't help but let his eyes wander and let out a soft whistle as he walked down the long hallway filled with rooms.

People claimed rooms, and there were plenty of enough rooms to go around that everyone had their own rooms. Unless they didn't want to, of course, Dream thought as he waved Bad and Skeppy goodnight, watching the door next to his door click close for the night. He could hear whispers from across the hall, where Karl and Sapnap were talking to each other in low voices, and he could also hear absolutely loud laughing from further up the hall, closer to the staircase, where Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo had piled into a room and dragging furniture around to rearrange their rooms, making creaking noises against the wooden floor of the house. This was quickly followed by shushing noises, coming from Jack.

Dream went into his room, grateful that Sapnap was kind enough to put all of his belongings in his room when they all got here earlier today, and Dream was occupied with making sure George was alive and stayed alive.

He sat on the bed, an old but expensive-looking four-post bed, much like the ones you would find in palaces and mansions. I guess they were at a mansion. The decor of the room was surprisingly homey, it was a stark contrast to the person he knew to be Eret. He has his own bathroom, completely stocked with hand soaps and clean towels. The place looked taken care of, like it had been waiting for people to come home and occupy it, unlike the untended gardens outside. Guess that's the perfect kind of safe house. Unassuming from the outside, but prepared on the inside.

Dream didn't know what to do.

He wasn't good at the whole sleeping thing, and though he most certainly needed some having stayed up for hours and hours on end when George was at the hospital, something was keeping him from sleeping.

He couldn't do any work, there really isn't any work to do. None that he can do alone, and none that he could do safely. He'll be damned if he tried to go on the internet and have Herobrine track his location and send a SWAT team down the door by dawn. He really wanted to know what the news was saying about him, about his team but decided that the added stress wasn't going to be useful.

In any other circumstances, he would've called his mother. Checked in with the family, tease his sister, and made his brother get on video, and show him their family cat. Though trying to think about how his family is going to react to him being on the news and labeled as a criminal was giving him a headache, so instead, he laid down.

Still, sleep would not come to him.

A part of him thought that maybe it was the fact that this was Eret's safe house. *An enemy of my enemy is my friend, they were in a truce, and his soulmate would protect him-* All these are perfectly good excuses for him to not trust the room or the building that he was staying in. Dream is a trained secret agent, it is only fair that he would feel a little bit paranoid or cautious about his

surrounding, and that's why he does not want to sleep. He can't go to sleep.

That was one explanation.

There was another, more probable, though Dream would not admit it, explanation for his insomnia.

The same explanation for his late-night mulling and contemplating against the ceiling for the past few weeks.

Before the thought could pass through his brain, Dream's legs had beat him to the chase and the next thing he knew, he was turning the knob of his door, walking down the hallway, before stopping himself in front of the door, two to his right.

Dream stood there.

There was no light peeking from the cracks of the door. Well, there was no light down the hallway at all, actually. Dream hadn't checked the time, but if he had, he'd know that it was far past midnight by now.

Everyone was asleep, the house was quiet, and Dream stood there.

George wouldn't leave his door unlocked, right?

He's a world-class sniper, he wouldn't make that mistake.

Right?

Dream couldn't stop himself, his hand moving like an independent entity, gripping the doorknob and turning it. With only a little push, the door swung open. It was a heavy door, but the fact that it opened too easily sent chills up Dream's arms.

George's room was dark, which made sense when you were trying to go to sleep. Dream crept in through the smallest gap in the door that would allow him to, before stepping into the room and closing the door behind him. He watched, a figure turned to his side, comfortably tucked under the blanket.

Dream didn't move, he just stood there and watched. A sense of calm washed over him, seeing the most subtle movements of George's breathing from afar. He leaned against the wall and stood there for a few moments, letting his busy mind go quiet.

He's okay.

He's alive.

"Are you just going to watch me sleep?" The voice from under the blanket croaked sleepily.

To say that George's voice shocked Dream was a little bit of an understatement. The tall blonde jumped back only to thump his own head against the wall trying to run away. Dream let out a little groan only to be replied to by a soft chuckle.

George pushed himself off the bed and turned to the figure standing by the door. Neither of them could see the other though there was enough light from the window that both could see each other's silhouettes.

Silence fell in the room, Dream unsure of how to answer or even begin to explain why he had snuck into George's room and watched him sleep. He had no defense, no good ones anyway.

But George didn't seem like he was looking for an answer or an explanation.

"I'm not going anywhere," George said softly.

Sure, the words sounded completely normal. Of course, George isn't going anywhere. This is his room, his bed, Dream was the one being the intruder. In a larger sense, George isn't going anywhere either. The mission to take down Herobrine was bigger than the both of them right now, and George wasn't going to leave it unfinished. Not that Eret and Wilbur would let him anyway.

But something in the way that George's words settled. The softness in his tone, though the meaning was pointed and clearly meant towards Dream. Dream knew.

"Can't blame me for wanting to make sure," Dream's voice was low, clearing his throat as he

looked down towards the carpet. "You're quite the disappearing act."

"Maybe my codename should've been Houdini," George joked, sitting against the headboard, pulling his legs against his chest. It seemed that he's almost forgotten about his injury though, as he quickly flinched when the pain struck his leg.

Dream surged forward instinctively though stopped himself when he realized. George could only give him a soft and tender laugh.

"Are you really just gonna keep watch?" George tilted his head in question.

Dream was quiet. George doesn't claim to know his soulmate all that well, seeing as how they've barely ever done anything other than fight and work. But he could tell that Dream was quiet. Quieter than he had ever been, or should ever be. And George knows he's to blame.

Throwing his covers off his body, George threw his leg off the side of the bed. He pushed himself off the bed into a standing position, swallowing the wince that shot up to his torso, before slowly making his way to where Dream had stood quite catatonically.

They were close, George only inches away from Dream that he could feel his warmth, though not close enough to touch. George looked Dream up and down, slowly, and shakily, bringing his hand up towards Dream's face. He hesitated, when his palms got close to Dream's face, though he let out a breath of relief when Dream leaned in, pressing his face against George's hand, melting into the hold. George allowed himself a little smile as he brushed his thumb gently against Dream's cheek

"You saved me," George's words were barely a whisper. "I'm alive."

There was a large lump in Dream's throat that he swallowed, letting himself feel the cold touch of George's fingers against his skin. It was a surreal experience to think that he was currently getting comfort from the same fingers that have probably taken lives.

"Foolish saved you," Dream corrected, though he continued before George said another word. "You're stupid," The smile on George's face did not falter, only softened.

"I know," George replied.

"What the hell were you thinking?" Dream said, his voice scolding but gentle. "What could that have achieved, I don't know what you could've ever-"

George could only offer Dream a shrug and that was enough to stop Dream in the middle of his rant. "I'm sorry," He apologized. Dream thought back to the last time he and George had a conversation before George went missing. George had said the exact same thing. George had apologized before, and Dream drove him away to the point he risked his own life to try and buy Dream's forgiveness. The guilt sat heavily on Dream's chest.

"You don't have to apologize, I-" Dream began.

"No," George cut in adamantly. "I do. And I am. I never wanted- I never expected-" George couldn't seem to finish his sentence. "You're right. I haven't been thinking about you," He confessed. "You know, you live long enough alone, you never stop to think that people wouldn't understand the way you think. I just- I've lived long enough alone that I didn't realize it was selfish. I'm selfish."

"I don't think that's true," Dream muttered.

"Well, I was ready to sink you for the *greater good*," George said the last bit with a little scoff and an accent that sounded suspiciously similar to Eret's.

"You risked your life for me," Dream countered easily. "Your safety and identity when you told my friends your name all those weeks ago."

"Well I-" George could feel his cheek burning up, Dream's bright white smirk shining in the dark. His throat suddenly felt dry, and he felt like he got caught. "Shut up," Was all he could say before Dream's smirk widened into a full-fledged smile, George followed with his own more timid and embarrassed smile.

It felt good to be able to smile. Lord knows neither of them has smiled in days, weeks even. Only little pockets of joy in the tensest moment of their lives. Still, it seems like the worlds fell away, and they were alone. Undisturbed, unbothered, looking into each other's eyes.

"It's not Puffy's fault, you know-" George tried to cut the silence in her defense. "She wasn't the one who shot me, and she didn't know that Galecki was going to bring Mr. J. And she didn't even-"

"And you call yourself selfish?" Dream said, bringing his hand up to brush a strand of hair away from George's face. "Thinking about her and me in a time like this."

"You were close to her," George reasoned.

"I'm not mad at her, I'm just-" Dream sighed. "I saw her name, on your phone. So I just had a lot of assumptions, and no one actually told me what happened. And I know she doesn't deserve that treatment from me, I'm just mad at- Myself? Everything? I don't know," He chuckled sadly at himself. "I'm upset I couldn't protect you. I betrayed her, and she doesn't even know that Herobrine is in bed with Davenport, I- I just feel like I failed her and I failed you, and I just can't process all of it."

"You're not a failure," George almost wanted to laugh at him. How could a man so kind and perfect be having so many doubts about himself? "You tried your best, and we're living in a world that is unbelievably complicated. I'm- I am-" He exhaled a shaky breath. His hands now resting against Dream's chest, his fingers getting familiar with the feel of his shirt. "I am not the soulmate you deserve."

"George-" Dream muttered.

"I'm sorry I'm not the soulmate you wanted, and I'm not the soulmate you deserve," George repeated. "I'm sorry that you're- stuck with me. And I couldn't be luckier that I- And none of what happened was your fault, nothing that happened in the past few weeks is something any normal person could even begin to navigate, and I couldn't be more thankful that you-"

It surprised Dream more than it surprised George that Dream was the one who leaned in and pressed their lips together. But it wasn't the first time that night that Dream's body did things before his brain could catch up.

It was tender, and very brief, that their lips were in contact. Neither of them barely moved, though the sweetness bled through. Pulling apart, their breaths were on top of each other, Dream looking down on George's long eyelashes while the shorter man chose to keep his eyes closed.

A beat. And two.

Dream leaned in yet again, not giving either of them a moment to think, pulling George into a

much deeper, much more passionate kiss. This time their lips allowed themselves to move in sync, a touch of playfulness as Dream brought his hand up to George's chin, pulling him even closer. George could feel the corners of his mouth as well as Dream's smile through the kiss, his heart beating at twice the speed as he brought his hand up to tangle his fingers on Dream's hair.

It was a minute, maybe a bit more. It wasn't that long, though it felt like forever, in the best way possible.

They were out of breath, panting slowly once they fell away from each other. They stayed close though, foreheads touching, hands still holding on to each other. Dream planted a kiss on top of George's eyelids while George kept his eyes closed, almost like he was scared of what would be there if he opened his eyes.

"I don't deserve you," George gulped, his breath shaky. Dream could feel the tiniest of squeezes from George's hands. "I've killed people," He declared.

Dream could only laugh, shaking his head before pulling George's by the chin, forcing him to tilt his head up towards Dream. Dream stayed silent, waiting until George steadied his breath before finally opening his eyes. Oh, how beautiful were his brown eyes, even and especially with little light from the moon in the darkroom?

"So have I," Dream offered lightly.

The emotions swirling in George's chest were not easy to figure out. It was a cocktail of fear and anxiety, overthinking, and everything bad under the sun. Though he couldn't help but smile along when he saw Dream's crooked little bright smile in the dark.

"I'm-" George pursed his lips. "I'm not going anywhere. And I'd like for you not to stand by my door like a guard dog."

Dream rolled his eyes lightly, pressing the lightest kiss against George's forehead. "I'll leave," He volunteered.

"I didn't say you had to go," George quickly corrected himself, his grip on Dream's hand tightened. Dream tilted his head, waiting for George to elaborate. "I just don't want you standing there like a sleep-paralysis demon."

Dream could only laugh as he allowed himself to be dragged toward George's bed.

No more words were exchanged that night, and none were needed for their mutual understanding. Dream helped George limp toward his side of the bed, pulling the covers to properly tuck George in, before walking to the other side of the bed and climbing in as gently as he could.

The two of them lay in bed facing each other. Neither of them said good night, they simply closed their eyes, feeling the unfamiliar though, comforting feeling of having the other side of the bed dip down from the presence of a person there.

It was probably the soundest sleep either of them had had in a while, but even then, neither the sniper nor the secret agent was used to sleeping in. This was evident by the fact that they were both awake just after dawn.

And if they woke up even closer to each other than the position they were in the night before, if they were holding each other close, George's head resting against Dream's chest, well. That's just a secret between themselves.

"I should probably sneak out of here," Dream's morning voice was not one of the things George had thought about at all, though he wasn't disappointed.

"No," George answered simply, sighing dreamily, feeling Dream's chuckle vibrate across his chest as George rested there.

"When people start to wake up, it'll be impossible for me to sneak out of here," Dream said. "And Bad wakes up pretty early to make coffee."

"There's always the window," George offered coyly.

"You want me to jump out of the window?" Dream asked, his tone sounding incredulous, though the way his hand never stopped caressing George told a different story.

"You'd survive," George shrugged, his arms still draped over Dream. "And I can't. I have a broken leg."

Dream looked down at George's cheeky smile and rolled his eyes. "I'm not jumping out of the window," He replied.

"Of course not," George muttered. "You're staying here, with me."

"Then you'll just have to deal with Tommy finding us and making a very loud, very dramatic fuss," Dream concluded.

Dream felt George stiffen up before pushing himself up off the bed, looking at Dream with mild horror.

"Yeah, get out," George agreed.

"Thought so," Dream laughed.

Dream was fixing himself, his hair, his clothes, anything to make him look at least presentable should anyone catch him in the hallway back to his own room. It wasn't like they did anything, he didn't look particularly rough, though people might still be able to see that he looked very slept in. He looked at himself in the vanity mirror, before catching George looking at him, watching him with a soft smile on his face, sitting up in his bed.

Soon.

They were headed towards doomsday, and things are beyond complicated. But if he could do it once before he died, before either of them do something stupid or before anything stupid come for them- If he could wake up next to George in the morning, he was glad he could at least do it once.

Hopefully, there's more of that to come. Soon.

"See you at breakfast," Dream told George, his hand already gripping the doorknob though he couldn't quite turn it. Dream turned around and climb onto the bed, pressing a quick kiss on George's lips, which George returned with a little laugh.

"See you at breakfast," George said, and with that, Dream left the room.

The door clicked behind Dream, and he felt the coldness of the morning greet him. He was thankful that it didn't feel like anyone was awake yet, so he was able to sneak back into his own room.

Dream had an impeccable sense of timing as not even twenty minutes later, just as Dream finished brushing his teeth, washing his face, and his morning routine, he could hear Bad leaving his room and walking down the hallway.

Dream quickly changed into a fresh set of clothes before going down, seeing Bad already starting a pot of coffee in the kitchen.

"How'd you sleep last night, Dream?" Bad asked.

"Surprisingly well," Dream answered honestly.

"Are you sure? You're up pretty early," Bad commented. "I would've thought you'd sleep in some more, seeing as how you haven't slept in days," Bad winced as he cracked a few eggs into the bowl. "And I mean literal *days*."

"Yeah, thanks for looking out for me, Bad," Dream gave him a genuine smile. "I slept well though, very comfortable. I promise."

"Right?" Bad suddenly gasped. "I didn't think the bed was going to be that comfortable, but it was. They're super comfortable," he gushed. "I didn't have the heart to wake Skeppy up, he's still completely sound asleep upstairs."

"How's your hand though?" Dream asked. "Sorry I didn't really ask yesterday after you crashed your car into the side of an Interpol SUV."

"My hands are completely fine, just a little bruised," Bad shrugged. "We've dealt with worse injuries before."

It didn't take long for the bacon fumes and the sound of the toaster to start waking people up, or at least, bringing them down.

"Are you trying to cook beans?" Tommy asked with a frown, rubbing his eyes sleepily.

"There were some cans, and I thought you guys might appreciate an English breakfast," Bad said happily.

"You're doing it wrong," Tubbo said, gently shooing Bad away from the stove. "Go eat your American breakfast, we'll deal with the British stuff."

"I get no appreciation in this house," Bad huffed, pretending to be irritated, but in reality, was unbothered and smiling. He's grown quite used to the three rascals.

Bad took his plate and his mug of coffee before sitting next to Dream. People were coming down in batches, each of them making their own breakfast. By that, he means only the people who had the energy made themselves some breakfast. Jack ate some dry cereal, so that's that.

Dream tried to keep his face calm when George came into the kitchen. He didn't quite know if he wanted to be casual, or pretend like nothing happened the night before. He didn't know if he should pull George's chair out for him, offer to make him breakfast, get him a cup of coffee, or something. Anything.

He took too long to think that George had already stolen some sausages and toast from Ranboo before pulling and sitting down in the chair closest to Dream with a glass of orange juice.

"Mornin'," George greeted the table, throwing an extra smile at Dream before he ate his breakfast.

"How's the shoulder today?" Bad asked kindly.

"Better than the leg," George said. "I think I might try some target practice out back to see if I can still ai-"

"No," Both Dream and Foolish's voices were quick to jump in and cut off George, which was only a little bit shocking. George almost looked offended at Dream's interjection.

"Not yet," Foolish said, his mouth full of eggs, shaking his head adamantly. "Sniper rifles are really hard on the recoil not to mention you rest it on your shoulder. It's still tender, you're gonna tear it up some more before you even give it a chance to heal," He swallowed his mouthful and chugged his juice before continuing to talk. "At least two weeks."

"What he said," Dream added.

"Two weeks?" George exclaimed loudly. "I can't be useless for two weeks, I promise I'll be careful," He whined, much like a child would.

"If you tear your shoulders up permanently, and you get chronic pains, and suddenly when you're trying to steady a shot your shoulder goes *Sike*, and you miss a shot, that's on you," Foolish muttered sarcastically. "Can't be a sniper if you're shaking and shit, there goes your perfect record."

"How do you know about his perfect record?" Dream asked quizzically.

"Good morning everyone." It was like the answer came when called. Puffy had walked into the kitchen, going straight for the fridge.

"She told me," Foolish replied, ignoring the possibility of arising tension left over from the day before.

"Told you what Foosh?" Puffy asked, pulling a little cup of yogurt that the fridge seems to have stocked.

"My perfect record," George said proudly.

"Well, knowing what happened at Billington, your record remains perfect," Puffy replied, her eyes glancing at Dream briefly.

"I would still consider that a failure," Tommy piped up. "Finding Dream is a failure if I've ever seen one."

Dream rolled his eyes and chucked a piece of leftover toast crust at Tommy who cried out

indignantly. They erupted into a cozy chuckle across the kitchen and everything felt fine.

Everything would've been fine had it stayed that way.

But they were not so lucky.

The smoke alarms started beeping and flashing all across the house and within seconds, there were more and even louder siren noises. Everybody was on alert, and if there were still people upstairs on the second floor, they'd all come down by now.

"Fundy, turn the stove off," Sapnap scolded, running towards him. "You can't even cook breakfast?" He muttered.

"I didn't burn anything!" Fundy yelled defensively.

It took them collectively a few seconds to realize that Fundy was right. There was no visible smoke anywhere. They shared a few confused looks, a few of them covering their ears from the blaring noise. That was when Eret ran into the kitchen.

"That's the intruder alert," Eret declared.

"It's the fire alarm," Skeppy said, feeling silly that he was correcting the person who owned the house. "The fire alarm is the one blaring."

"The intruder alert *is* the fire alarm," Eret clarified.

"Well, then what happens when it's an actual fire alarm?" Quackity asked as the people started to file out of the kitchen, remaining on alert the second they heard the word intruder.

"I don't have a fire alarm," Eret said, pulling out the gun that was tucked by his belt against his back.

"That doesn't sound safe," Foolish commented.

"*There is an intruder,*" Wilbur barked. "Everybody, get into positions, for the love of god," He yelled.

"If you don't have a weapon, go upstairs," Dream commanded.

His eyes looked over to the three kids, Foolish and Ponk, pushing Fundy and Karl toward the stairs. Dream, much like Eret, tends to carry a piece on him at all times. He watched as Bad cocked his pistol, Skeppy just as ready behind him. Sapnap and Puffy were positioned a bit hidden away, in case the intruder decided to come in guns a blazing.

Dream felt a presence next to him, turning to see George with his gun prepped and ready. He gave George a look that can most accurately be translated as '*Are you fucking kidding me?*', and it was immediately replied with a disgruntled look from George that said '*Oh, c'mon man.*' A nudge of Dream's head told George that he needed to head up the stairs with everyone else. George conceded before Dream had a chance to say anything, trudging up the stairs like a child sent to their room. He was sneaky enough to try and bring his gun with him though, but Dream knew better, his hand wrapping around George's gun, silently telling George to let go of it, knowing George would try and use it given the chance.

Jack was the closest to the door, Quackity just behind him. They watched tensely as the golden knob of the front door that leads towards the patio turned. Whoever the intruder was, they had no problem going through the front entrance. They are either very stupid or very brave. Meanwhile, the alarms didn't stop blaring.

The door swung open and-

"Whoa, whoa, whoa-" The intruder pushed the door open, though the second they saw the barrel of Jack's gun, took more than a few steps back, hand raised in the air. "Don't shoot, don't shoot. It's just me, Jesus Christ."

Dream's jaw dropped. And he didn't know which confused him more.

The fact that Sam was currently standing outside the door, or that Wilbur and Eret seemed relieved when they saw who it was.

"I gave you the security code, numbnuts," Eret yelled. "You've set off all my alarms."

"I did use the security code you asshole," Sam replied. "I entered fucking- last week's code? You never gave me the new one."

Dream looked around. It was somewhat comforting to see that his teammates were as confused as he was. Bad and Skeppy dropped their guns, heads tilting at the sight of Sam crossing through the doorway.

Sapnap turned to look at Dream, his face equally horrified and confused, eyes wide and eyebrows raise, waiting for Dream's facial expression to change, or something- anything, to explain whatever is happening right now. Quackity didn't even move, his gun still raised and pointing at nothing as Sam had already entered the building.

"Sam?" Dream muttered though the volume of his confusion made it sound like he was questioning himself more than calling the Pandora Warden. The tall man turned to see him though, with a very familiar and kind smile. Sam opened his mouth to say something but was quickly interrupted.

"Sam!" Tommy yelled from the top of the stairs.

Tommy practically barrelled down the stairs and tackled Sam into a hug. Sam stumbled back with a laugh.

"That's the welcome back I was hoping for," Sam said happily. "How are you doing, you little rat?"

"I met your soulmate. He's actually pretty cool," Tommy said.

And the mood in the room shifted. Sam followed Tommy's gaze up the stair to see Ponk, standing there with an indiscernible look, mouth ajar and equally confused as the rest of the house save a few people. Same cleared his throat, and smiled just about the driest smile imaginable, before giving Ponk one nod.

"Right," Sam said, desperate to switch gears. "Can we turn the alarm off please?" Just as the words left his mouth, the sound stopped. "Thank you."

"Sam," Puffy called.

"Hey Puffy," Sam greeted. "Glad to see you're here."

"I-" Puffy stuttered. "I- But you-"

"I don't understand," Dream said out loud. "Why are you- How are you- You're working with them?"

"Uh-" Sam looked a little awkward. He tried his best not to glance up the stairs at where Ponk had been standing quite catatonically, but he failed, meeting Ponk's eyes again. "After I realized what I did wrong, about two years ago, was it?" He shrugged lightly. "Eret approached me and told me- a little bit of everything, and I've- Well, we all have the same goal here, right?"

"Two years ago," Bad said. "That would've been around the time you and-" His finger trailed up to point at Ponk, still standing at the top of the staircase, but Skeppy quickly shut him down with a quick smack of the hand, and the other hand covering Bad's mouth before he could anything else that'll make things even more awkward.

"I'm so confused," Sapnap said.

"You'll get it eventually," Wilbur said simply, coming back from his quick trip out to the gates, making sure that Sam locks up after himself. "Come look at our map, Sam, we've got quite a few things to talk about."

There were several people, namely Dream, Sapnap, and also Puffy, who stood there absolutely flabbergasted that Sam had just walked through to the kitchen and stolen himself an energy drink, before following Wilbur to the study. It didn't seem real, the way the rest of the house treated this as a normal occurrence, and the way Tommy hugged Sam. How long have they known each other? What exactly has happened?

"I'm gonna-" Sapnap said slowly, pointing toward the study before leaving after Sam. It wasn't like he wanted to be part of the planning and the strategizing, he finds it a bit boring actually. But now Sam's there, so he has more than one reason to go and join the meeting.

Dream was left to sit alone on the couch in the living room. Well, not quite alone.

"You doing alright there ducky?" Puffy was really testing the waters with the nickname. Dream looked up, giving her nothing more than a dejected smile.

"I'm just-" Dream said. "I should be happy Sam's here- I'm just a little confused. And honestly, I feel a little-"

"Betrayed?" Puffy offered, taking a few steps closer, waiting for Dream to either offer her to sit next to him or to tell her to go away. When she saw him shift aside on the couch to give her a spot to sit in, she took that as an invitation.

"Been feeling that a lot lately," Dream chuckled.

"Sorry," Puffy apologized.

"Not from you," Dream scoffed. "You're actually the only person that *that word*-" He huffed a heavy air from his lips. "I betrayed you, not the other way around. I'm sorry, Puffy. I saw your name on George's phone and I assumed-"

"I got your soulmate shot," Puffy offered. "Which, I still can't tell if I have a right to be mad at you, by the way, for not telling me that you found your soulmate, ducky."

"Absolutely not," Dream shook his head. "Can't be mad at me when you called me *ducky* in front of said soulmate."

"I'm sorry I didn't know any better," Puffy said. "George texted me, and I called Galecki-"

"I didn't know any better either. I just- I thought you-" Dream stopped her from saying anything further. "You're a better person than I am, Puffy. You didn't deserve me acting like a bitch to you all of yesterday. Even after knowing you called Foolish and saved George's life."

"Seems only fair, I was the one who got him shot so, I think it's pretty even," Puffy chuckled. "I get it. You've been stressed, he almost died. I don't blame you for that."

"How fucked up is your career right now?" Dream asked.

"I don't have an active arrest warrant, unlike someone in this room," Puffy told him. "Could be a lot worse, to tell you the truth."

"Were you the one who put that out?" Dream asked accusingly, though his tone and the smirk on his face remained playful.

"No, believe it or not, I was not the one who sent out an arrest warrant for your name even after you broke into a top-secret facility and commenced the self-destruct command," Puffy told him, giving him a soft shoulder bump. "Didn't have the heart to do that to you. Didn't believe you'd actually do it. But your name was attached to it and I couldn't hide it so Galecki-"

"Galecki's always hated me, hasn't he?" Dream pondered.

"Oh yeah," Puffy laughed. "You jumped the ranks a little too quick, and you had a rebellious fire in you, as demonstrated by-" She vaguely gestured to the house around them. "Though, I think he could tell that you were a good person. And if he was doing sketchy shit, he wouldn't want you around to take him down."

"I think I broke his nose," Dream said proudly.

"And his cheekbones, teeth, eye socket, split his lip, cranial fracture-" Puffy listed. "Pretty sure he lost hearing in one ear."

"Should've made sure he couldn't talk anymore," Dream said coldly.

"You've done a number on him, he won't get away for long," Puffy assured him.

"So you called Sam? After Houston, you called Sam?" Dream asked.

"Well, I wanted to know what he knew about you if he knew anything really. I heard about Eret escaping and I knew both you and Sam were involved in the transfer, I just thought you might be having a mental breakdown over, well, what I think we'd call a pretty big failure, letting a criminal from maximum holding security out into the streets," Puffy explained. "Maybe he knew if you were beating yourself up or if you were stressed out and-"

"Hold on," Dream said, laying his hand over Puffy's to stop her taking, the gears clicking into place in his head. "Sam?" Dream called loudly.

Dream waited a few seconds before the study door swung open and Sam's head popped out.

"What's up buttercup?" Sam replied.

"You were the one who suggested Eret get transferred out of Pandora and to California," Dream stated slowly, trying his best to recall the events that happened it that very first Pandora visit. "Were you part of that plan? The whole escape thing?"

"Took you long enough," Eret's voice chimed in loudly from inside the study.

"Sorry," Sam gave him a little apologetic smile.

"No fucking way," Dream heard Sapnap exclaim from inside the study.

"Right," Dream could only laugh in disbelief. "Of course."

"You two wanna come and join us soon?" Sam asked.

"We'll be right there," Puffy told him, standing up from the couch.

"What else don't I know? What have I not been seeing?" Dream was at a point of resignation, though he would be lying if he said it didn't feel like a weight's been lifted off his shoulders. "Oh like you and Foolish. How do you know him, how do you know Punz's brother?"

"Who's Punz?" Puffy said confusedly, waiting for Dream so they both could walk to the study.

"Sapnap's- complicated," Dream waved his hand. "Foolish. He's Punz's brother. You don't know Punz?"

"I just met him on one of my very frequent ER trips," Puffy shrugged. "You're telling me you know Foolish's brother?" Part of the conversation bled into the room as the two entered the study. "What are the odds?"

"You'll find that a lot of things happening around us in the present day-" Wilbur interrupted their conversations. "-are rarely a coincidence. Including the people we know and the people they know. Including who knows about us, and when they learn about us. We're not amateurs here."

"What does that mean?" Sapnap asked.

"We've been recruiting," Wilbur said. "Him, her," He pointed at Sam and Puffy. "And many others. Herobrine has reaches and connections to an immeasurable extent. They're in every intelligence agency, government department-" He huffed. "So we had to match their levels."

"In the next week, you'll be meeting all of our undercovers," Eret said. "It's a small, small world," She mused. "And it's about to get a whole lot smaller."

Chapter End Notes

so i totally lied about when i'm gonna update since the last chapter (haha i totally said soon but this is very much not soon) but I'm back. I have chapters 13 and 14 already written, and the final chapter is in progress. I'm going to be posting on 27-29-31 December. so Got Your 6 will officially be OVER by new years !!

no excuses, I have just completely left the mcyt fandom, I'm not on mcyytwt, and I don't watch anything anymore, but I'm not one to leave (beloved) things unfinished, so I hope this chapter (and the next 3) will be a final wrap up and goodbye to all you great wonderful people. I really do hope you guys like it, and i hope i don't disappoint. I may not be in the fandom anymore but writing this fic has been such a unique, wonderful, and unforgettable experience and I hope you guys enjoyed it as much as I do.

enjoy the next few days, enjoy the end of the year

you can comment, kudos. (no user subs necessary, it's unlikely I'm going to write on this account again anytime soon, but I'm not gonna complain)

see you in 2 days.

Chapter 13

Chapter Notes

hope you guys had a good boxing day yesterday and are enjoying the holidays!

as promised, here is chapter 13 !!

it's like long as fuck (almost 18k words) hopefully you guys enjoy this monster of a chapter

happy reading !

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Rayleigh

"So how long are we waiting?" Tina asked.

"Two hours," Karl replied, nervously checking his phone. "We need to make sure they all clear out before we do our part of the task."

Karl found it a bit awkward, sitting in his old office with his ex-co-worker, friend, and also Archive replacement Tina.

"You still haven't really explained what was going on, Karl," Tina said. "We have two hours," She mumbled softly.

"Do I-" Karl frowned a little confusedly. "Do I need to explain what's going on? I thought you knew what was going on."

"Nope," Tina answered softly. "Puffy just called, and I used to work with Sam a little bit, so I knew when they needed something, it was going to be important. And I get it, the whole taking down evil-"

"Shh-" Ponk very quickly shushed the conversation down, a bit harshly, his eyes nervously glancing at the corner of the room where there were cameras still blinking red.

"Right, sorry," Tina apologized. "I mean, I trust Sam about as far as I can throw him, but that's not very far."

"You trust Sam?" Ponk questioned.

"He was nice to me when I wanted to try to do fieldwork," Tina said with a smile. "Helped me with my gun certification and everything. And he also wasn't mad at me when I chose to go back to desk work even after he spent all that time helping me," She said with a guilty look on her face.

"How was he?" Ponk asked warily. "I mean, you knew him in the past 2 years, how was he?"

"He was great," Tina answered cheerfully. "Like I said. He was nice, he was super helpful. He got his own team and he did really well."

"He's not asking about that," Karl said with a little knowing smile once he saw Ponk's defeated face. "Ponk, if you wanna ask her the question, you need to be more specific. She's not gonna get it."

"Get what?" Tina sounded a little peeved at the implication.

"Sam's my-" Ponk hesitated, looking at Karl for help finishing the sentence.

"Sam's his soulmate," Karl obliged and finished the sentence.

"Oh," Tina squeaked, tilting her head whilst she examined Ponk's face.

Tina was new. Well, new-ish. New enough to not be around when every single Herobrine watercooler gossip was about Sam and Ponk's explosive break up. To be fair, Karl wouldn't know anything about it either had he not been living with those two nutcases for the last week.

"Yeah, I wouldn't have gotten that," Tina admitted. "Soulmate?"

"Yeah," Ponk nodded.

Ponk hasn't seen Sam in two years. That is a pretty long time. And when Sam showed up at the door last week, being all Sam and shit, honestly Ponk wasn't super excited. He hasn't been able to say the word *soulmate* without feeling physically sick. He felt a little silly, turning around and running the other way every time he would see Sam walking up the stairs or down the hall.

See, Ponk thought he was safe, surrounding himself with bad guys in the last two years, like literal criminals, thinking that it would deter the man nicknamed 'The Warden', the epitome of all things good and lawful, from ever getting close to him ever again. Ponk was not so pleased to see that Sam has some weird friendship with Ponk's comfort criminals. He'd complain to George about it but the sniper has been a little occupied lately.

Still, he thought the whole thing was bullshit. That thing about your soulmate not being able to hurt you? The warning label that you should most definitely read more carefully is that it only applies to physical harm. Ponk doesn't think he'd felt more hurt than when he was with Sam. He'd almost rather take a bullet to the leg than relive what he felt as he watched Sam let Herobrine take all of his work.

But still, curiosity is one hell of a bitch.

"He doesn't talk about you," Tina said. "But I think that's just because it'll hurt more if he tries to talk about you."

"You didn't even know we were together, Tina," Ponk laughed kindly, seeing Tina's effort to comfort him.

He knew better though. Sam didn't talk about him at all.

Good.

Good.

"No, I'm serious. I think if you're heartbroken, you wouldn't want to talk about it because you're not over it," Tina pressed a little harder, trying her best to convince Ponk, a man she met less than an hour ago.

"Don't worry about it, Tina, I was just talking nonsense," Ponk's tone was light but definitive.
"Karl, would you like to explain the situation to her?"

"So Ponk's actually been flirting with this doctor named Foolish," Karl started. "But Sam showed up at our house last week, and they've been broken up for two years so things are a little tense but get this, Sam and Foolish were actually-"

"Karl!" Ponk yelled, grabbing the first thing he could reach from Tina's desk, which ended up being a little cat notepad, and chucking it at Karl's head. "I meant the reason we're in the Archive, not my love life!"

"Wait, I know Foolish," Tina gasped excitedly. "I met him at the emergency room when I was in Austin with Puffy."

"Handsome, right?" Karl said, seemingly unfazed at the fact that Ponk tried to assault him.

"Very," Tina agreed, nodding towards Ponk.

"Evil government agency trying to demolish the world," Ponk insisted.

"We're a private agency, actually," Tina said. "Common misconception since a lot of governments do work with us and-"

"That's the part that you have a problem with?" Ponk asked and Tina quickly shut her mouth with a guilty little smile

"She knows what we're doing," Karl told Ponk.

"She literally said she didn't," Ponk replied.

"She knows what she needs to know," Karl said. "All she needs to do is let us into the system, and then proceed to escape with us," He turned to his friend. "I hope you have running shoes on."

"I do," Tina nodded. "You haven't mentioned the two people that's been waiting in the parking lot though."

"Oh," Karl said. "Tall one's Fundy, little one's Tubbo."

"And they are?" Tina asked.

"Criminals," Karl replied. "Computer geniuses. Both."

"And they can't come in because the cameras will get them," The realization finally hit Tina, who gasped and nodded absentmindedly.

"We can," Karl nodded in agreement. "Well I can, I'm not so sure about Ponk, actually."

"I'm surprised *you* can," Ponk said. "Your whole team has active arrest warrants. Or like most of them, at least," He huffed. "The biggest risk for me is that this is a Herobrine facility. They may not like me much after the bitch-fest I threw before I left two years ago."

"It's easy," Karl said. "They never check for the guy in the van. Of course, my only concern is the few Herobrine agents that do know that I went off with Dream's team correctly assume that I'm involved in the whole she-bang," He shrugged lightly. "But nobody ever visits the Archive and Tina's on our side, so no one is gonna come to arrest us. Not anytime soon, anyway."

"Plus I'm watching the cameras," Tina said, sipping on her coffee lightly. "We'll be fine."

"I sure hope so," Ponk said.

"You guys still haven't explained what we were doing," Tina said. "We have one hour and forty-five minutes. Get to it."

Seattle

"Are all your watches synced?" Bad asked.

"I don't wear a watch," Billzo replied.

"What do you mean you don't have a watch?" Puffy said.

"If it matters, I don't have a watch either," Eryn mumbled.

"Then how are you supposed to know what time it is?" Bad sighed.

"You use your phone, duh?" Billzo muttered. "We're in a new age, old man, nobody has watches. Your phone is synced to the internet and follows the international time, you wouldn't *need* to sync your watches."

Bad turned to look at Jack, giving him the most exasperated look. Jack only shrugged with a mildly amused smile. Bad barely had any time to get to know his '*teammates-for-the-day*' as Eret would call them. He'd been told that he was going to be flying to Seattle with Puffy and Jack, neither of which he had a problem with, even better as he was sure he could work well with either of them.

However, Bad was informed that a couple more people would be joining his team in Seattle. He just didn't expect them to be Tommy's age. Bad and Puffy literally met them this morning, and thus far the only thing they learned about the two boys is that they're young, they're friends with the kids and they have a knack for crime. Oh, and their names, obviously.

"You're telling me, in the heat of the battle, when you have both hands on your weapons, you would have to take out your phone to check what time it is?" Bad exclaimed.

"Why would you need to check the time in the middle of a shootout?" Billzo retorted. "What kind of battles have you been fighting?"

"We're also not allowed weapons. We're minors, Techno wouldn't let us," Eryn replied.

"Not lethal weapons anyway, we have some less-fun ones," Billzo corrected and Eryn nodded along.

"Any particular reason they gave us two minors as part of our break-in crew?" Puffy said.

"Just because we're young doesn't mean we're not capable," Eryn chimed in defensively.

"They're fine," Jack brushed it off easily. "You'll be surprised at what they could do."

"Okay well, I don't mean to underestimate what you guys could do. I'm not a big fan of the plan regardless of your involvement," Puffy grumbled, though the incessant tapping of her fingers against her thighs showed more of her discomfort than her irritation. "I don't know how well this is going to work, let alone if it's going to work at all."

"Well, that doesn't matter, it has to work," Bad said. "We *have* to work. We're up first."

"So-" Billzo said. "Wilbur did send me a PDF. I'm not gonna lie to you and told you I read it. I didn't. So I'm not the surest-" he drawled. "-about what we're doing here."

"Oh good lord," Puffy sighed.

"Well, I guess we'll just have to figure it out as we go," Bad inhaled deeply, trying to calm his heartbeat down, which he was failing at. "We're up in seven."

Miami

"I heard about you."

Dream was not expecting small talk from the other side if he was honest with you. He was a little tense. He didn't absolutely love that he was stationed at the Miami HQ. It was a little too close to home. Quite literally, his mother and sister lived there and if anything was gonna go wrong, the local news would pick it up so fast that it was impossible they don't find his family based on a-guy-who-knows-a-guy-who-knows-a-guy.

He didn't hate his team. Eret was being nice, or maybe Wilbur was feeling good, or whatever the

case was, Dream got to take Sam and Tommy to Miami with him. And then Wilbur told him that someone was going to be waiting for him, which turned out to be a guy called CPK, who looked just like any normal guy. He looked nice even, Dream wouldn't've pegged him to be a criminal.

But the pièce de résistance was that he got to take George. George was with him, in Miami. Call it being love-struck, puppy love, whatever, but Dream wanted nothing more than just to take George to the ice cream parlor he loved down the street from where he grew up and just take in the gorgeous weather.

No. Instead, he is standing on the rooftop adjacent to the skyscraper that is the Herobrine Miami HQ.

And he was being chatted with by someone from George's team called CPK.

Oddly enough, was the only other person in his team without a completely normal name.

"In what way?" Dream tried to be curt and polite, even though the rooftop thing wasn't helping.

"Well when somebody takes out the best sniper on the streets, you tend to notice," CPK chuckled, giving George a playful and teasing look.

"How bad is it?" George replied with a lightness to his voice. "How many people saw that Billington shot?"

"Oh everyone did," CPK said. "It was making the rounds around the Whatsapp groups."

"Fantastic," George replied sarcastically, giving Dream a joking kick from his healthy leg. "My reputation's all tarnished because of you."

Normally, Dream would be geeking out about George casually flirting with him, but the height thing must be particularly bad that he didn't reply back. He tried to distract himself by watching Sam and Tommy goof around with each other whilst setting up their equipment. Still very weird, and Dream hasn't really had the time to process that relationship, or how it came to be. But somehow he felt a little comforted, that Tommy, Wilbur, and Tubbo all had another adult looking out for them.

An adult that wasn't actively encouraging them to do the crime.

Though, Sam's currently on their side, so who knows where his morals actually lie.

"Which is worse?" CPK asked George. "Losing the perfect record or telling the underworld that you shot your soulmate."

"Soulmate," George replied in an instant. "Are you joking? CPK, he would get hunted down."

"Didn't think you'd care," CPK shrugged. "Surprising, coming from you."

"I'm surprised too," George muttered, sitting down next to CPK like two friends meeting at a high school reunion.

Dream listened to the conversation, his heart going all crazy but he was sure this time wasn't just because of the height. He took a breath before forcing himself to look in George's direction. He offered George a smile, to which George winked at him.

"Well he's a quiet one, isn't he?" CPK commented, talking about Dream as if he wasn't there. "You just said all that and he said nothing."

"He's scared of heights," George brushed it off calmly, excusing Dream in front of his friend.

"You're what?" Tommy screeched from afar, having picked up on the conversation. "Dream that's so embarrassing. You're scared of heights? You're tall, do you just close your eyes every time you stand up? Are you scared of the dark too?" He rambled in his loud laughter.

"Tommy be nice," Sam said warningly, and other than Wilbur, Dream has never heard Tommy listen to someone so quickly.

"We won't be here long," George said, his words specifically soft for Dream. "We'll go zip across in a bit and then you'll be in the comforts of the inside of a building. We just need to wait for the

time."

"The zipping across is what I'm concerned about," Dream finally spoke after a long period of silence, his eyes going to the zipline Sam and Tommy had just set up between the two buildings.

"You'll be fine," George assured him. "At least we won't be escaping the same way we go in."

"Yeah," Dream nodded, checking his watch. "We've got about 18 minutes before we go."

San Diego

"So," Foolish muttered awkwardly, trying to cut the tension that is Wilbur and Quackity staring-no, *glaring* into each other's eyes. "How did you-" He cleared his throat when his voice cracked. "You come here often?"

The two girls laughed.

"Well she travels," Shubble replied, pointing to Niki. "I live in LA, so it's not that far from here."

"How did you guys get into-" Foolish waved his finger around. "-crime?"

"Wilbur calls, and I answer," Shubble replied. "I owe him one, from a while back."

"Friends," Niki answered. "I'm friends with Techno too, actually."

"Oh yeah, me too," Shubble said, snapping her fingers as if she simply forgot an item on her shopping list and not her connection to one of the most dangerous weapons dealers in the world.

"Cool, cool, cool," Foolish hummed. "And Techno is?"

"Wait you don't know Techno? I thought you said he was a Herobrine agent?" Shubble whispered

to Niki.

"Well, he is technically from their team," Niki shrugged. "He's not a Herobrine agent though, he's a doctor," She told her friend before turning back to Foolish. "I forget you don't know who Techno is."

"And I still don't," He nervously chuckled.

"And you don't want to," Quackity said definitively.

This was the first time either Wilbur or Quackity had spoken in the last twenty minutes. They were stubborn like that. Quackity's words and his tone were definitive though, so the group fell into another awkward silence immediately after. Well, for Foolish it was awkward. Niki and Shubble looked like they knew each other pretty well, falling into a casual hushed conversation that involved a few chuckles and laughter. Neither of them seems to be paying attention to the potential murder hazard that's brewing a few feet away from them.

"They don't like each other," Foolish spoke to get Niki and Shubble's attention.

"No, not so much," Shubble said in an amused voice, finally giving Quackity and Wilbur attention.

"Might have to do with the time Quackity used Wilbur's name to snitch out a bunch of criminals and made it seem like Wilbur was the one selling them out in exchange for getting his sex tape off the internet," Niki said.

"Completely ruined my reputation," Wilbur yelled. "And I don't even *have* a sex tape," He hissed.

"That's what you get for throwing me into the ocean," Quackity screamed back.

"You're right, I should've dropped you on the concrete," Wilbur exclaimed louder.

"Fucking *try*!" Quackity bellowed.

"Okay! Okay," Foolish interrupted before either of them was gonna start throwing down with each other. "Forget I asked."

The group went back to a very familiar silence. This time, Foolish isn't too keen on disturbing it. He'd rather take out his phone and text Ponk to see how he was doing.

"29 minutes of complete silence," Foolish muttered to himself, his fingers typing away. "I could do that."

Portland

"Go fish," Ranboo said.

Sapnap frowned at his hand, giving it a suspicious squint before looking up from his cards and glaring at a masked Ranboo.

"He said go fish, you're thinking too slow," Aimsey complained.

"I think you two are cheating," Sapnap declared, folding his cards against the floor.

"That is a horrendous accusation, I will not stand by it," Ranboo gasped dramatically. "I can't believe you would even suggest something as horrible as that."

"No, I think he's right," Skeppy nodded along. "These cards are super fishy, I don't believe you two at all."

"Is it because I'm gay? Because that's homophobia," Aimsey retorted.

"No! What? That-" Skeppy immediately started sputtering

"That won't work on them, Aims-" Ranboo chuckled. "Their soulmates are men."

"Oh are they?" Aimsey's tone changed completely, cooing at them. "That's so sweet. Awh."

"Don't try to distract me from the fact that you're cheating," Skeppy accused.

"Pish posh, so we cheated. It's not our fault that you two can't see sleight of hand," Aimsey huffed, putting their card down to the ground as well. "Either way, I think there's a more interesting topic of conversation here. You know your soulmates? *Ranboo knows your soulmates*, so I'm guessing you work with them," They rambled. "I'm sure that's all exciting. How did you guys meet? How did it happen? You know I'm only asking that because honestly, what are the odds- People rarely find their soulmates let alone work with them or see them every day."

"Karl's not-" Sapnap blurted out.

Sapnap did not know what possessed him to say- Well, anything. Especially not something that starts with '*Karl's not*' when talking about soulmates. If he was being honest, which he rarely ever was with himself, it may have something to do with how heavy the guilt has been sitting on his chest for the last week.

Nothing has changed much, other than the fact that they were kind of living together.

It was that stupid safe house. See, Sapnap could have gotten his own room, but much like Dream (and the two of them had a discussion about this) he was a little paranoid and didn't trust the house or the owner, and didn't like the idea of Karl sleeping alone in a strange room. Someone could very well creep in in the middle of the night and kill him. And well, okay, Sapnap wasn't excited about sleeping in his own room either.

And who was he kidding? That first night he totally wanted to spend private time with Karl and when Karl asked him to share a room, he jumped at the opportunity.

And so comes the domesticity, the waking up together, the breakfasts, everything that they've been doing together over the last few weeks while running across the country though dialed up to 11.

And every time he looks at Quackity, his chest gets a little tighter.

"You okay?" Skeppy asked.

"Yeah," Sapnap shook his head. He turned back to look at Ranboo and Aimsey looking at him, both intrigued and concerned. He hated it even more when he saw that Eret had also piqued interest in the conversation from where he was standing a bit away from the circle of 4 people playing cards on the ground. Sapnap didn't see any way out other than being completely honest about the situation. "Karl's not my soulmate."

With a few, omissions and alterations of course.

"We've never really tried, and never bothered to," Sapnap said lightly. "We've been through life or death situations but the relationship itself is pretty new, you know?"

"Sorry, I thought you guys were, you know-" Ranboo looked apologetic though he didn't look like he took it too seriously as Sapnap didn't make it seem like a big deal (even though it was). "But you and Bad are though, right Skeppy?"

"Yes," Skeppy replied, still a concerned eye toward Sapnap though he thought maybe taking away a little bit of the attention away from Sapnap would help. "Bad and I are soulmates. Thanks to your brother, actually," He smiled at Ranboo.

"Your *brother*?" Aimsey exclaimed, turning to Ranboo all wide-eyed. "I didn't think your brother was capable of playing matchmaker."

"I didn't think so either," Ranboo looked amused. "How was that? Did he introduce you two or-"

"He dared Bad to throw a knife at me," Skeppy replied. "And then proceeded to bet me to shoot Bad."

Ranboo and Aimsey were stunned and silent, mouths agape.

"And you just did it?" Aimsey raised an eyebrow.

"We were young and dumb," Skeppy shrugged. "Herobrine training gets kinda boring so you spice things up."

"That sounds like Techno," Ranboo agreed.

"Any word?" Eret's drawled voice cuts into the conversation at a perfect time. "Did your *soulmate* say anything yet?" The emphasis on the word made it clear who the message was for, and that Eret was very in tune with the conversation.

"Bad said that he's going in right now," Skeppy nodded after checking his phone. "Timer set to 46 minutes."

Seattle

"Why do we have to go first?" Eryn whined as they snuck through the service entrance from the basement of the building. They were in a white van, which in any other case would look awfully suspicious, but when you're undercover to look like regular maintenance workers, you fit right into place.

"Because-" Bad was going to answer but trailed off the second he sensed some security guards doing rounds around the corner. He backed right onto Billzo's foot, who almost let out a yelp but Eryn, amid his complaining, was still quick to react and covered Billzo's mouth before a noise came out.

"Steady," Puffy warned them, tapping the fake clipboard she was holding softly before leading the team through, passing the security guards in the hallway. They didn't give the group of four people in jumpsuits any attention. A little comical, seeing as how even the most prestigious intelligence agency in the world would fall for such a cliché.

The group slipped into the first stairwell they could find, the stairwell that they'd preemptively picked out when scouring the building's blueprints, and let out the breath that they'd been holding.

"I can't believe we have to climb up to the 27th floor," Billzo muttered.

"You can climb if you want to," Puffy snorted. "We're taking the elevator from the 3rd floor."

"This is why you read the PDF Wilbur sent," Bad hummed.

"You still haven't told us why we're going first," Billzo quipped back.

"Because," Bad started as the group of five started to trek up the stairs to the third floor, lugging the duffle bag he brought over his shoulder. "We're relatively unwanted."

"Which I don't know how you managed to pull that off," Jack scoffed impressively. "Seeing as you both were in the literal car that crashed into an Interpol SUV."

"Well I'm still an active agent," Puffy explained. "Bad got lucky. He's technically got a search warrant but not as explosive as the other ones. We don't have Dream, or Eret, or Wilbur on our team, so we've got no- What would you call them?"

"Alarm trippers," Bad offered.

The five of them snuck out into the hallway and stood calmly in front of the elevator, waiting for it to get to their level. They didn't talk when they were waiting, they're not stupid like that. Maintenance workers, oftentimes, are very invisible. You don't pay them any mind when you see them walking down the hall, waiting for the elevator, holding a bucket, a clipboard, or a bag of tools, you won't even notice them. What you will notice, however, are people talking about their plans out loud. So they were clever enough to wait until they got into (thankfully) an empty elevator, and the door dinged close. Puffy swiped a keycard that they'd stolen from the Austin base a few days ago before they flew out and pressed the 27th floor.

"We don't have alarm trippers," Bad repeated, though he kept his body facing towards the door and away from the security camera on the roof. "Because whoever starts first is going to need to stay the longest. We're gonna leave last."

"We have to stay?" Billzo complained. "That's not how we work. We steal and we run. We escape."

"Thought you could handle it?" Bad said, his tone inflected up in a teasing manner.

Billzo didn't have time to complain before the elevator dinged and the door opened on the 27th floor.

The five of them worked efficiently, knowing exactly where to go to the millimeter, positioning themselves like a dance. Billzo and Eryn slipped around, keeping their head down until they passed the security cameras before turning back to plant a bug on the camera when they were sure they were out of sight. Bad and Puffy were looking out, both ends of the hallway. Bad took the round to make sure the floor was relatively empty, most server floors are as there are no offices, Puffy took the stairwells and the elevator. Jack had the door, connecting it to the machine Fundy had built to bypass the biometric locks.

Smooth like butter.

Less than a minute later, the machine beeped and the padlock of the door to the server room lit up green.

"Bad, I'm in," Jack declared.

Bad came back and gave Jack the bag that he was carrying. It was Eryn and Billzo's turn to help watch guard, making sure that the security cams were still getting fake feedback, and helping Puffy keep a lookout. Bad took out the laptop from the bag, Jack took the cable and found the exact port that he needed to connect to.

The laptop was already preset with the commands it needed to run, Ponk made it very easy, all they had to do was press enter.

There was a mutual look between Bad and Jack, both as nervous as each other before they looked down at their watches, counting down the seconds until the time stuck 11 AM PST.

And enter.

"Did you do it?" Eryn asked suddenly from behind them, making both men jolt in surprise.

"Jesus, don't do that," Jack scolded. "Aren't you supposed to keep watch?"

"I just wanted to know if you did it," Eryn said.

"We did it," Bad answered. "And now we wait."

"How long?" Eryn asked.

"You didn't read the PDF either did you?" Billzo exclaimed accusingly, also appearing at the door.

"One hour and seven minutes," Bad replied, ignoring them.

Miami

"Why am I going first?" Dream asked though it sounded more like a pathetic whine. In his defense, he was standing at the edge of the roof, trying his best not to look down as George is securing his harness to his waist.

"You're not," George chuckled fondly. "Sam is. But you are going before me."

"Why can't CPK or Tommy go first, or you? You can go first, I'll go last," Dream bargained.

"No," George said definitively. "Sam is going first to prove to you that it's safe, and you're not going last because then no one's gonna be on the other side to push you over."

"I call dibs on pushing Dream over," Tommy exclaimed.

"No one is pushing Dream over," George said. "Other than me, obviously."

"Does that count? Like if I fall and die, because you're my soulmate, you can't hurt me so I won't die because you were the one who pushed me off?" Dream muttered.

"No," Sam answered, scrunching his eyebrows and trying to suppress his laughter. "You will still die if you fall off a skyscraper. It's like dozens of stories and gravity is-"

"Not helping!" George whacked Sam on the shoulder. "Shut up and go before I push you over too."

Sam laughed as CPK clipped him on the line. "See you on the other side," Sam gave his team a quick salute before letting himself fall off the roof's edge, tugging the line down with his weight, though it quickly stabilized. Less than a few seconds later, Sam landed on the helipad on the Miami HQ rooftop.

"You're next Dream," CPK clicked his tongue, calling Dream to clip him onto the line.

"You'll be fine," George said, tugging Dream towards the line.

George remained close by as CPK clipped Dream's harness onto the line.

"Listen," Dream said, his hand gripping tightly onto George. "If I die-"

"You're not gonna die," George said.

"If I fall and die-" Dream repeated. "Just know that I-"

"You are not going to die," George couldn't help but laugh slightly. "If I can survive getting shot, you can survive a very secure and safe zipline."

"We should've gone to the facility and Seattle, why did we pick the one with the roof entry?" Dream groaned to himself.

"You were the one who picked Florida," Tommy mumbled.

"I didn't-" Dream protested adamantly but George quickly cut him off.

"You will be fine," George insisted, standing in front of Dream. "I'm right behind you. You'll be okay. Do you trust me?"

"No!" Dream exclaimed almost immediately. "Are you joking? You're a bag of crazy, you got yourself shot, do I look like I trust your judgment?"

"Good," George said with a grin on his face. "You shouldn't."

Before a single word could be uttered from Dream's lips, George pressed his lips against Dream's. A quick kiss, enough to distract Dream as he melts into it, missing the fact that George placed both his hands on Dream's chest and pushed him off the side of the roof.

There was a scream, thankfully it wasn't long as Dream quickly realized that the whole point of breaking in is to not draw attention to yourself. Seconds later, Dream felt a pair of hands on his shoulder, stopping his rapid ziplining and helping him stand up.

"I don't get it," Sam said as he unclipped a rather traumatized-looking Dream from the line, allowing Tommy to drop down next.

"What?" Dream managed to squeak once his heartbeat wasn't assaulting his ribcage.

"You've flown planes before. That's height," Sam said. "How is that okay and this isn't? How are you scared of heights?"

Dream shook his head and let out a noise that sounded like I don't know, as they waited for the rest of the team to zip down. Dream is embarrassed to admit that the remaining three people took less time to jump down than he alone, due to all the bargaining.

Dream was still pretty useless waiting on the rest of his team to clean up the rest of their equipment and retrieve the zipline. Thankfully all of it could be done behind the helicopter parked on the helipad that was conveniently obstructing the cameras. Not that Dream was particularly concerned about the cameras, he knew better.

"Come on," CPK said. "It only goes down from here," He patted Dream on the back towards the roof door. "Get it?"

"Got it," Dream sighed, walking towards the door.

He didn't get far before he felt a hand slip into his and squeeze, pulling him further down. George had really soft fingers, has Dream ever mentioned that before? He couldn't help but smile a little goofily as George intertwined their fingers, walking down the stairs through the roof door hand in hand, like high schoolers that just made out on the school roof.

"Only 3 floors down right?" CPK asked. "Stairs are faster than the elevator?"

"Keep your head down though, there's a camera at every level," Sam said, putting a baseball cap on Tommy's head. "Especially you two lovebirds," He turned back to George and Dream, both of whom quickly pulled the brim of their cap and their hoods down to cover their faces.

"Can't believe they didn't secure the rooftop," Tommy muttered as they headed down to the server room floor. "Rookie move from Herobrine."

"Maybe because no one is stupid enough to zipline across," Dream mumbled.

"We have an inside man, Tommy," Sam chuckled at Dream's complaints. "The helipad alarms are just the easiest to turn off because it's isolated from everything else."

"I think Herobrine's just stupid," Tommy said. "It's still too easy. People could zipline across and steal their helicopters. We could steal their helicopter!" He gasped excitedly

"Don't jinx it, Tommy. We're not stealing the helicopter," George rolled his eyes as the group slipped out of the stairwell door into the hallway. "Go deal with the cameras Tommy, or I'm going to make sure it's not so easy for you to get out."

"You're so mean to me Gogy," Tommy stuck his tongue out before going off to tamper with the security cameras with CPK.

Sam was quick to head to the door, using the same machine that Jack used in Seattle or the second of the four machines that Fundy made to crack the code. It worked perfectly, just as it had in Seattle, not even a few minutes ago.

George took the laptop off the backpack that Dream had been carrying passing it to Sam. George gave Dream a signal, telling him to go help keep watch with CPK and Tommy, leaving Sam and George to plug the laptop into the port Sam had already found.

They set the laptop on the floor, Sam keeping a close eye on his watch, George's finger hovering over the enter button. The second watch hand hits 14:15 EST, and Sam nodded. George pressed the enter button.

"Now we wait," Sam said. "52 minutes."

San Diego

"I like how we're just walking through the front door," Foolish said, his voice all shaky with nerves, his palms very sweaty as he wiped them against his shirt. "It's not dangerous at all."

"That's the beauty of us," Shubble said. "We're not wanted by the government."

"Well I am," Niki declared with a sneaky little smile. "They just don't know it yet."

Niki walked towards the front desk and gave a very sweet smile to the two security guards watching the screens of the camera. Foolish stood there, waiting quietly next to Shubble.

"Hi, we have a meeting here today. With a Mr. Wilson?" Niki said. "We're M&P Consulting, we're here for your yearly audit."

"We don't have an audit scheduled for today," The blonde security guard sitting in front of the monitor said. "We've never had an audit before."

"You have a Mr. Wilson, right?" Niki asked. "He says he works in finances."

"We don't have a Mr. Wilson in the finance department," The black-haired guard on the right answered, looking more alert than his partner. "Ma'am this building is private property, you need to leave."

"Ma'am?" Niki exclaimed. "Do I look like a ma'am to you?" She faked outrage.

"We don't-" The same security guard replied but before he finished, Shubble had already cut him off.

"This is outrageous," Shubble exclaimed, not to the security guard but to Foolish. Though her volume was not an accident. She needed to be heard by them. "I know who we're recommending first."

"Recommending?" The blonde one questioned.

"Recommend for removal," Shubble answered viciously. "Your bosses are thinking of cutting off staff and we're here to consult."

Foolish stood there, honestly a little stunned by how well the two people he was with were acting. He inhaled, keeping quiet and trying his best not to say anything and blow their cover.

"This is unbelievable," Shubble continued, walking backward and continuing her complaints. "The level of unprofessionalism and we haven't even walked past security and-"

Without looking where she was going, Shubble walked right into someone. Unfortunately, it was a man holding a cup of coffee. The cup practically flew, coffee spilling all over Shubble, before crashing all over the floor. Shubble could only shriek in horror.

"Why does nobody in this building know how to work properly?" She cried out.

"I'm so sorry miss, I'm so-" The man began to apologize.

"I can't believe-" Shubble yelled.

"Would you take her to the bathroom please?" Niki told the black-haired security guard who was already standing because of the situation. "Before she makes a scene," Niki's voice was low, noting the urgency and not giving the guard a second moment to think twice.

"I'm so sorry," The man nervously pushed up his glasses.

"Stop talking!" Shubble yelled, letting herself get ushered away by the guard.

"We just have a meeting," Niki said. "That's it."

"Oh, oh dear," The man straightened his tie, looking more nervous than ever. "You're Mr. Wakefield's 11:30 appointment."

"Wakefield?" Niki gasped, looking furiously at Foolish. "You said his name was Wilson?"

"I'm- I'm-" Foolish wasn't scared. He shouldn't be confused, but he was. "I'm sorry?"

"Sorry," Niki rolled her eyes, scoffing coldly. "Yes, we have a meeting with Mr. Wakefield."

"Oh god, Mr. Wakefield, of course," The remaining guard said, frantically looking for the check-in log.

"Take them up to the meeting room on the fourth floor," The man told the guard, patting himself down to give the guard his key card from his pocket. "I'll deal with their guest passes and I'll contact Mr. Wakefield with my apologies."

"Are you sure? Agent Slime, we-" The guard stammered, frazzled at the whole situation.

"I'm sure, don't let these good people wait another second. Go, now, go," Slime practically shoved the guard from his post, picking up the landline on the desk and punching a phone number. When he saw the guard was still looking at him in confusion, he stared. "Go, now! Fourth-floor meeting room!"

The guard nervously nodded and hurriedly took Niki and Foolish towards elevator B. The second the elevator doors close, Slime put the phone down and raised his hand, waving it toward the door, gesturing for someone to come in.

"That was quite a show," Wilbur commented.

"Well, I'm quite the actor," Slime said proudly, his chest all puffed out. "You should know this by now."

"Thank you, Charlie," Quackity said.

"Hey, Q. Good to see you again," Charlie replied with a playful tone to his voice while handing him a key card off the security table. "Take elevator A, card's gonna take you straight to the 31st floor. Quickly, before your friend and the guard comes back from the bathroom. I'll send all three of them up in a second. I have to deal with the cam feeds from here," He pointed at the computer.

"You're the man," Wilbur winked, walking straight for the elevator, Quackity gave Slime a wave saying '*see you later*' before following Wilbur towards the elevator that was waiting for them.

They really did just walk through security, huh?

There was another awkward silence as the doors of elevator A closed and Wilbur and Quackity, the only two people that couldn't have walked in on a fake appointment, stood next to each other.

"Do you really think this is going to work?" It was the first time either of them broke the silence, and it came from Quackity.

"We can't afford to think that it won't," Wilbur replied.

"What have you got to lose?" Quackity said. "You and Eret. You're- You're pioneering this whole mission. I just- I don't get it. You're all crime, all murder, chaos, and death, why does it matter if Herobrine is doing bad things?"

Wilbur stayed quiet, looking at the number change on the elevator display.

"Aren't you guys, on the whole, *the more the merrier* type of business?" Quackity continued. "Isn't this super beneficial to you, or like, do you have *some* morals? Like human trafficking is *too* far."

"It is," Wilbur answered curtly. "We have our own code of conduct. And other personal reasons that are none of your concern."

"Alright," Quackity mumbled, sensing the coldness in Wilbur's tone.

The door dinged open and Quackity and Wilbur quickly did the rounds to put the bugs on the security cams. They moved efficiently and they were done before the elevator dinged again, putting them on high alert. When the door opened, revealing 4 very familiar people, both Quackity and Wilbur sighed in relief.

"Just us," Charlie said knowingly.

"Come on, we're running a little late," Wilbur said.

Foolish opened the briefcase that he was carrying as part of his cover and handed the biometric breaking machine to Quackity. He also took out the cable and laptop in preparation for when the server doors opened.

"Nice performance, by the way, ladies, you were fantastic," Wilbur said. "Foolish, you're gonna have to work on it a little if you're going to be a grifter."

"Why would I need to learn how to lie? I'm a doctor, I'm not a grifter," Foolish said, waiting for Quackity to give him the signal that tells him the door is now opened.

"Thanks for the cold coffee, by the way," Shubble turned to Charlie. "I appreciate it not being hot."

"Of course," Charlie said. "I wasn't gonna dump a cup of hot coffee on you for a gift."

"Hear that Wilbur?" Shubble's voice was accusing as she jokingly glared at Wilbur.

"That was *one* time and it was soup," Wilbur said insistently. "Was I supposed to wait for the soup to get cold? We had to get away from the MI6 stupid agents, and it worked, didn't it? You didn't get arrested."

"Me?" Shubble said. "You were the one who just broke into the MET Gala the night before."

"Alright, that's enough," Niki said to Wilbur and Shubble, before walking to follow Foolish and Quackity into the server room. "Are we ready?" She asked, checking her watch and counting down the seconds.

11:30 AM PST.

Foolish clicked the enter button, watching as the screen shows the commands being run.

"Done," Foolish said. "Set the clock to 37 minutes."

Portland

"I don't know why we got the most stupid entry point," Sapnap complained to Skeppy.

"Ziplining is the stupidest entry point," Skeppy said. "You wanna go ziplining with George?"

"Okay, maybe not the stupidest entry point, but it's up there for sure," Sapnap continued to whine. "Could've walked in as construction workers like Bad. Or just walk through the front door like Quackity."

"You're a walking alarm, construction worker won't work, and neither would the acting gig," Eret said. "Plus, you're shit at acting."

"You don't know that," Sapnap hissed back.

"This is a relatively easy entrance, stop whining," Ranboo said.

"Are you not a fan of heights?" Aimsey asked.

Sapnap looked at the window washing platform lift that is supposed to hold all five of them and bring them up all the way to the 20th floor.

"I'm not excited at having no way out," Sapnap replied. "Not a fan of having to go back down the way we came from."

"We'll be fine," Skeppy said. "What's the worst that can happen?"

"No one is down there to help us out of the pinch. The alarm trips off and someone stops the machine so we're stuck up here, agents come and fight us, throw us off the roof. Honestly, there's a lot of-"

"Get in, we're going up," Ranboo said, pushing everyone onto the window washing lift before closing the gate. "You can complain on our way up."

"And you're sure someone is waiting for us?" Sapnap said, holding onto the metal fence until his knuckles turned white.

"I'm positive," Eret replied. "You'd like him."

It was slow. A lot slower than Sapnap had liked. He felt like a sitting duck, out in the open, in plain view, in daylight. He isn't sure that he'd like it if it went faster, but he could still hate how slow it was. One minute, two minutes, five- He watched the reflections of the buildings behind him move as they rose higher and higher.

They stopped, not soon enough, and Sapnap was surprised that he was greeted by a rather tall man on the other side, smiling at them, waiting for the platform to stop completely before throwing the window open.

"Boost me, Ranboo," Aimsey said as Ranboo already put his hands together, giving Aimsey a boost to jump through the window.

"Alright, Skeppy, go next," Ranboo said, keeping his hand steady to offer Skeppy some help, but Skeppy easily jumped without any assistance.

The platform moved every time someone jumped off of it, but it didn't bother Sapnap too much as he was next. Eret quickly followed after him, and lastly, Ranboo pushed himself through.

"I've disabled the security on this floor," The man, who Sapnap could recognize as a Herobrine agent just by the way he stand and the way he was dressed. "Go now, quickly."

"Thanks, Beast," Eret said, quickly pushing Ranboo and Aimsey out of the door and into the hallway, Skeppy not far behind him.

"Nice to meet you, by the way," The man, Beast, introduced himself as he trailed to the back of the group falling into step next to Sapnap.

"Nice to meet you too?" Sapnap sounded unsure of why he was being singled out.

"I'm Jimmy," Beast introduced only confusing Sapnap even more as agents aren't known for sharing their real names, especially not to people they hardly know. "Karl's told me all about you."

That's when Sapnap realized why the codename Beast had been so familiar. He'd heard it several times from Karl, talking about when Beast was going to take him out for lunch and things like that. But Sapnap has never met the man in person or knows what he looks like. And how was he supposed to know that Karl's friend would be roped up in Eret's plans?

"Right," Sapnap said after he realized that he was silent for far too long, thinking about everything that was happening. Also that he was getting a weird look from Jimmy Beast.

By the time Sapnap fully snapped back into reality, Ranboo and Aimsey were already inside the server room. The laptop is on the ground, a long cable stuck to a port on the hardware.

"What time do you have?" Ranboo asked.

"Eight seconds," Skeppy answered.

"Three, two-" Eret counted along with her watch.

Ranboo clicked the enter button exactly when the clock hit 2:45 PM EST, and the screen displayed the moving lines of a running code.

"Well, one of you needs to go back out to the lift," Beast said, getting everyone's attention from staring at the laptop.

"Why?" Sapnap asked.

"People might think it's weird if there's a window washing platform out on the 20th floor with zero window washers for 22 minutes," Beast said.

"Fair enough," Eret said.

Seattle

"Are we done?" Billzo asked. "I know we're not really doing anything, but keeping watch for an hour is very mentally taxing."

"You've been playing rocks, papers, and scissors with Eryn for the last 20 minutes," Puffy criticized.

"Because we're bored," Eryn whined. "And tense. We're bored and tense, that's not a good combination."

"Just four more minutes. You've waited 63, you can do another 4," Bad said.

"Why did we have to stay here for a whole hour and seven minutes?" Billzo said. "I thought it was done in seven minutes."

"The whole database takes seven minutes to be downloaded, and eight to be uploaded and sent to the next HQ," Bad explained. "That's 15 minutes per city times four cities."

"And the extra seven?" Eryn said.

"Checking," Jack said. "Every download overrides the local database and every upload makes a copy. Ponk's program goes through the motions, corrupts, and replaces every single file so that we can remain untraceable for as long as humanly possible. Our laptop is the only one that has an additional command to check the newest download, right after it's been pinged through all 4 towers and the other three teams, to see if everything is wiped clean."

"We need to be thorough," Bad said. "And careful not to-"

Bad didn't finish his thought as he was quickly confronted by the laptop screen turning a flashing red.

"Damn," Puffy said, already on her way to pick up her phone. "I'm calling Ponk."

"And with 2 minutes to go," Jack shook his head. "Fucking brilliant."

"Ponk, it's flashing a warning red," Puffy said the second he picked up the phone. "I'm connecting Sam, Wilbur, and Eret into the call too."

Bad sat down in front of the laptop and started reading where the alerts are showing up. Puffy knelt down next to him and put Ponk, Sam, Wilbur, and Eret on speakerphone.

"What's the problem? We should be done by now," Wilbur asked.

"One file, we're missing one file," Bad read out loud. "We don't have a replacement for it because it's got encryptions I've never even seen before. It's a personal file, from- Oh god."

"It's a personal file from the Chief Director's computer," Puffy said.

"You've got two options," Ponk's voice a little crackly from the phone. "We can either get rid of it and leave it blank and it might show up on alert as a missing file, or we leave it and we don't have

all of their files."

"Leave it, we're sitting out in the open and we can't risk it," Wilbur said.

"Take it," Eret said at the same time.

"Eret, that'll set off alarms, and I mean physical ones," Wilbur replied over the phone. "We're already in these buildings too long and we-"

"We are taking it, this is not an argument," Eret commanded, but Wilbur didn't seem like he wanted to obey very much.

"He's right," Sam chimed in on the phone. "They're fast. We're talking alarms, and guards. We're going to be surrounded pretty quickly."

"We are risking people's lives, *our lives*-" Wilbur said.

"Somebody tell me what to do," Bad exclaimed.

"Ponk, take it," Eret's words are final.

"There is going to be an army after us," Wilbur continued. "We have to get out."

"Then get out," Eret said. "Everyone, prepare your escape routes. Bad is going to take that file and if the alarms go off, everybody needs to run."

"When," Sam corrected. "When the alarm goes off."

"Everybody go pack up," Wilbur commanded. "Bad's laptop is the only one that needs to be plugged in so the rest of you needs to be on your way."

"Don't get killed," Wilbur said.

"See you guys soon," Sam added, and with that, the other 3 people dropped off the call leaving Ponk the only one remaining on the line with Bad.

"Bad this is what I need you to type, exactly letter per letter," Ponk began.

Ponk began reciting a few lines of code that Bad quickly typed into the console. It was sweet and simple. You don't need to be complicated if you're not trying to hide yourself anymore.

"That's it," Ponk said.

"That's it?" Bad asked.

"Click enter, and you'll see a progress bar. The little box at the top right corner will turn green when it's finished," Ponk explained. "Then you're free to get out of there as soon as possible."

"Okay," Bad said as he clicked the enter button.

It took less than 10 seconds for the progress bar to show up and speed through the download and removal before the box turned green. Bad quickly unplugged the laptop from the hardware and stuffed it into the duffle bag.

"Right, see you later, Ponk," Puffy said, turning off the call.

"See, it's all fine and dandy," Billzo said. "I don't know why they're all so worried about it, there might not even be-"

The light across the hallway turned off and was quickly replaced with a flashing red, loud alarm to accompany. Instantly it felt like they were in Jurassic Park.

"You had to jinx it," Puffy groaned.

"Sorry," Billzo muttered.

"We have to take the stairs, the elevator's probably shut down, right?" Jack said though it was less of a question and more of a suggestion that can't be refused. Jack threw the stairwell door open, waiting for all four people to pass before they flooded down the stairs

"Twenty-seven *fucking* floors," Eryn yelled.

"Shut up and run," Puffy commanded.

The group of them barely got through 7 floors before the stairwell doors opened from floors below them and above them, Herobrine agents spilling from every door.

"Fuck!" Jack yelled.

"Language," Bad scolded.

The four of them jumped straight into fights. Bad ducked under punches, taking an agent by the arm and hurtling her down the stairs into 4 people trying to climb up. He wonders if he would recognize any of these people if he'd met them at a work conference, company retreat, or during their training days. He'd rather not think about it now though.

Puffy was on the same boat, though she too didn't hesitate to clothesline a young agent straight to their neck. She was small but she was also quick with disarming agents. She was the fastest one down the stairs. Jack was close behind her, dodging and punching first, and asking questions later.

The two youngsters were equipped with tasers and they weren't shy about using them. They were pretty ruthless about it though they were agile enough to jump from railing to railing, skipping floors like circus performers.

"Get to the fourth floor," Bad heard a voice on the comms.

Bad looked around at his team, all busy with their battles, confused about where the vaguely familiar voice was coming from. He didn't have time to question it, he saw the way his team perked up, all of them looked at each other trying to confirm that they all heard the same message in their ears. It was a quick nod shared between them before they all scrambled to get to the first floor.

Puffy was the first to reach there, finding the door to the floor wide open and the floor suspiciously empty and lacking guards and agents trying to take them down. Eryn and Billzo were next, pushing past a hesitant Puffy to escape into the empty hallway. Jack and Bad not long after, all five of them passing through the door, Bad pushing the door close despite the hoard of agents trying to push the door back open. Jack and Puffy put their weights on the door, helping Bad keep it close.

"We're on the fourth floor, what next?" Bad yelled, to particularly no one in their surroundings but hoping the mystery comms would reply.

And it did.

"Elevator doors are open," The voice said. "Jump."

"Jump?" Billzo exclaimed. "Jump where?"

"Into the elevator shaft. We've cleared the basement," The voice replied.

"Go, go, go," Bad said, as the two boys started running. "Jack, Puffy, go next, I'll run right behind you."

"No, you go first," Jack said. "I'm a faster runner."

"Just run," Puffy said, pulling both of them towards the elevator door.

When they reached the elevator shaft, they were all thankful that Wilbur had forced them to wear gloves as part of their uniform for breaking in. At least this means they won't get their hands torn apart when they slide down the elevator cables. It was a miracle they didn't fall and die or crash on top of one another, but the basement elevator door was prepped open for them, one after the other immediately running out to where their van was previously parked this morning.

They could hear footsteps running after them, though a bit delayed as a good few agents hesitated to jump down an elevator shaft. This gave them just enough time to run out the door, only to stop suddenly in front of their already running van. The man gave them a two-finger salute, his arm hanging out of the open window.

"Who's sitting in our van?" Billzo said.

"Corpse," Bad exhaled, the puzzle pieces finally clicked into place as he pinpointed where he'd previously heard the voice before. "Everybody get in."

"I don't know him?" Eryn exclaimed. "And he's wearing a mask!"

"Get in!" Corpse yelled, banging his hand on the side of the van.

There were no more complaints after that. They all climbed into it hurriedly, Bad getting the shotgun seat. The van barely had time to drive off before bullets were flying off across the garage. Corpse was a particularly harsh driver, and when he saw the ticket barrier, he only pressed his foot even harder against the pedal, accelerating and crashing through it.

"Eret sent you?" Bad asked after their van had driven a few distances away from the HQ, with no sight of Herobrine cars chasing after them yet.

"Me and some other people. Who do you think cleared the fourth floor?" Corpse chuckled. "They said you need help from inside the building."

"Took you guys long enough, I got my shoulder all fucked up at floor 12," Eryn whined.

"Well, you weren't supposed to trip the alarms," Corpse quipped. "We were the last resort."

"Where are the others?" Puffy asked. "How many others?"

"A few. Eret has a few contingencies she didn't tell you about," Corpse said. "I'm the only one

coming with you guys to Austin though."

"You're coming with us to Austin?" Billzo asked.

"Well, you'd need a pilot, for in case you tripped the alarm," Corpse smiled through his mask. "Didn't think you guys can fly commercial when you're wanted."

"Of course, he planned this," Puffy chuckled in amazement. "That's why he was confident about taking the file."

"That still wasn't cool," Eryn crunched his nose up in annoyance. "Should've warned us about the fighting."

"I can co-pilot," Bad told Corpse. "I'm a little rusty but we'll make it."

"Sounds good. We'll head straight to the airport right after we lose these guys," Corpse said, his eyes checking the rearview mirror to see black SUVs in the distance undoubtedly tailing them. He pressed the gas pedal even farther, jolting the car forwards. "Hold on tight."

Miami

"I hate this, I hate this, I hate this," Dream said repeatedly as he was standing on the helipad. "You said our exit is different than the way we got in, I thought you meant we were gonna come out the lobby. The ground floor."

"We were, we were," George said hurriedly. "I promise you we had a car ready street level but plans changed when Eret decide to take the files and trip the guards about where we are. We can't fight our way down over a dozen flights of stairs."

"I can," Dream said defensively.

"Well, I can't because you won't let me even hold a gun so this is the best escape route," George said. "We still have our harnesses on, and this is the quickest route."

George felt a little bad that he was spending most of the escape time before the alarms had started blaring trying to convince Dream that rappeling down the side of the building was the quickest way out. It was the best way out too. But good luck trying to convince somebody afraid of heights that rappeling down the side of the building is the best anything.

The thing is that everyone on that mission knew that this was a possibility. They wouldn't bring a whole harness kit and tons of equipment only for a way in, compromising their speed and agility, if they didn't think that it could also be used for a way out. It was always a backup plan, just one plan that they didn't tell Dream due to the fact that had he known, he wouldn't have gotten off the plane this morning.

"The line's not long enough," CPK told George.

"What do you mean the line's not long enough?" Dream was the one who responded, however.

"By how much?" George asked.

"Like, third floor?" Sam said. "Survivable."

"Survivable?" Dream exclaimed. "Free falling from the third floor is not survivable."

"It is if you fall properly," Tommy muttered. "Just tuck and roll."

"We're not tucking and rolling," Dream spat out.

"We're gonna have to. Dream I'm sorry, we're gonna have to-" George said. "They're coming after us really soon and I will push you off this building myself if I have to."

"George! We're not-" Dream was going to start on his whole rampage, though he was interrupted by a whistle.

Granted, somebody should have been watching the door. It was, technically, George's and Dream's

job to watch the door and make sure that no Herobrine agents are running after them. It *should* be their job seeing as how Sam, CPK, and Tommy were all too busy setting up the equipment that's going to drop themselves stories to street level without killing them. But Dream and George weren't quite good at their job.

Dream turned, and squinted, trying to see who had just whistled, while George moved faster than he did, pulling Dream's gun out of his holster and pointing it at the target.

"No, no, no no no," Dream's eyes widened in panic, his hand immediately grabbing the barrel of the gun, forcing it to aim down. George looked at him indignantly but didn't contest as much. "Don't shoot him, don't shoot him," Dream pleaded.

"Dream, we're exposed!" George said.

"He's my friend, we're not shooting him!" Dream yelled. "I can explain to him, he'll understand. I can- let me explain to him."

The target didn't say anything, closing the rooftop door behind him and wedging it close. He remained wordless, running towards Dream and George, who are still struggling over the handgun.

"Why aren't you watching the door?" Tommy exclaimed when he finally realized someone approaching them. Tommy and CPK too were very quick to take their weapons out and aim them at the target. This time it was Sam who told them to stand down.

"Oh thank god," Sam said. Dream whirled around to look at Sam, who understood what Dream's surprised look meant. "Yeah, he's one of us," Sam explained with a gleaming smile.

George's grip on the gun immediately loosened, but so had Dream's. A laugh of relief came out of Dream's lips, letting go of the gun, and running with his arms open. George knew he didn't have any right to be instantly jealous but he was a little curious at why Dream had instantly hugged the target.

The target, George scoffed.

The man raised his hand slightly and jingled a set of keys in his hands, his head nudging towards the helicopter. Both Dream and Sam perked up.

"You didn't," Sam said, and his response to this was to toss the keys he had in his hand to Sam. "Well Tommy, you got what you wish for," Sam muttered.

"What?" Tommy looked at him questioningly.

"We're stealing the helicopter," Sam said.

It didn't take much convincing for the group of, now six, to run for the helicopter. Sam jumped into the front, Dream quickly sat next to him, leaving plenty of space in the back for CPK, Tommy, George, and the target.

George really ought to learn this guy's name but thought anything resembling a question about the mysterious man would sound invasive and honestly, he didn't trust himself much to not sound like a jealous bitch. Which he wasn't. He was most certainly not. But he didn't know how to make the question '*So, who is this?*' sound any less toxic, so he'd rather stay quiet. He wasn't going to be all that quiet then he met Eret later and yell at them for not informing him about all the loose allies that he might potentially meet.

"You kept it fully fueled Cal?" Dream turned to the man, who by a series of events, was the one sitting next to George, across from CPK and Tommy. "Beauty."

Cal just gave Dream a quick wink, putting on the headphones over his head. They were barely in the air when they finally noticed the doors of the roof were busted open and people were now storming up towards the helipad. When a bullet struck the windshield, causing a crack in the window, Cal leaned forward and gave Sam a rapid three taps on his shoulder.

"Got it," Sam said. "Don't fall out," He warned.

Cal took Dream's gun out of George's hand, much to George's surprise. George was aghast. He was appalled. He was shocked and offended. He watched as Cal held on to the rail next to the door and unbuckled. Cal threw the door open and started shooting at the people who were shooting them. Not enough to kill them, he wasn't aiming all that seriously, but enough to make them duck out of the way and for Sam to pull the chopper up cleanly.

George knew one thing about not being afraid of heights, but even he wasn't keen on leaning out of a chopper taking off. Sam periodically checked back though, making sure that Cal hasn't fallen out,

and that he was steering the chopper steadily enough that he wouldn't fall out.

"I think we're clean," Dream yelled into the mic on the headphones, his voice barely heard through the spinning blades. "Get back in your seat Calla, put your seatbelt on."

Calla rolled his eyes and gave George a look that could only be described as '*Can you believe this guy?*' before ultimately listening to Dream's instruction, handing the now empty gun to George, closing the door, and putting his seatbelt on.

"This is so cool," Tommy yelled excitedly over the headphones. "Sam, you never told me you knew how to fly a helicopter!"

"Because I know you'd ask to steal it even more," Sam replied. "We're not keeping it."

"Awh, why not?" Tommy said.

"These thing's got a tracker on it. We're just getting to the airfield and we're moving to the plane," Sam explained.

"Plus the fuel on this thing won't last us to Austin," Dream added.

"It's a good getaway ride though," CPK chimed in, smiling as he stretched his hand out to Calla. "I'm CPK by the way"

George watched as Calla shook CPK's hand, while his other hand moved around in a few gestures that took George far too long to recognize as sign language.

Oh, so George is just a dick.

"Right," Dream said. "Everyone, meet Callahan. He's one of our friends from training. Great engineer, and very chatty, as you can see. He'll just talk your ear off."

George watched as Callahan flipped Dream off.

"Please Callahan, let someone else take part in the conversation," Dream said playfully.

"I'm glad you took the keys," Sam said. "When Eret said you were our contingency, I thought he just meant you were going to hotwire the chopper."

Dream turned to look at Callahan's answer, as Sam has to keep his eyes on the sky.

"He said if he was gonna get hunted down anyway, why would he go through the trouble of hotwiring," Dream translated. "Plus, he didn't need to steal the keys, he just took them. Punched Hutton to get the keys from his office."

"Stop!" Sam barked a loud laugh, Dream joining in. "You did not."

"*Hutton is friends with Galecki*," Dream said, watching Callahan's hands. "No, you don't have to apologize, Calla, we didn't know either, I'm sure you don't." George could hear how Dream's voice changed from translating for Callahan to replying to his words. "You didn't know."

"Who's-" This was the first time George said something in a while. "Who's Hutton?"

"His supervisor," Dream explained. "His department probably helped built the planes for Project Overworld," He watched closely as Callahan signed to him with an apologetic look on his face. "Oh nope, Calla built the whole plane," He said exaggeratingly, Callahan's eyes widening, shaking his head furiously.

"Well then you'll know how to take it down then," George said. Callahan, giving him a smile and nod as a reply.

"Yeah, that's where we come in. I'm glad my message went out to you Cal," Sam said. "And I'm glad you're on our side."

"I'm glad you're here, Cal," Dream said, smiling sincerely at his friend.

George noticed that Callahan was staring at Dream, his head giving the most subtle nudge toward George's direction, his eyes expressively pointing at George.

"Oh right, sorry," Dream mentally scolded himself. "George, this is Callahan," He introduced them again. "Callahan, this is George. My soulmate."

George hated the little skip of his heartbeat when the words left Dream's mouth. "Nice to meet you, Callahan," George greeted. He watched intently as Callahan signed what he assumed to be the same greeting back, and then a bit more.

"He says nice to meet you too," Dream said, though Callahan signed further than that. Callahan gave Dream a look when Dream stayed quiet. "I'm not translating that last part."

Callahan rolled his eyes and dug for his phone in his pocket. Dream's eyes nearly bulged out of his skull, almost jumping to the back seat had Tommy and CPK not blocked him out of sheer curiosity. Callahan had pulled up his Notes app and quickly typed in it before handing his phone to George.

I've heard a lot about you. He's been obsessed with you for so long, even before Billington Tower. I guess now I know why.

George couldn't suppress the grin on his face, giving the phone back to Callahan with a proud smile on his face after a quick type. Tommy and CPK have finally succeeded in pushing Dream back into his seat much to his dismay. Callahan looked down at the addition to his note, chuckling fondly.

Don't tell him, but I like him a lot too.

San Diego

"You two need to run," Charlie said, pointing at Wilbur and Quackity the second Wilbur got off the call. "Put this on," Charlie said, pulling two overalls from the bag that he was carrying.

"What is this?" Quackity asked

"The Herobrine janitor uniform," Charlie replied. "Quick, put them on."

"Don't have to tell me twice," Quackity said, taking the dark blue overall from Charlie's hand.

"Technically, he did tell you twice," Wilbur muttered as he followed Quackity's lead and stepped into the overall.

"Do you ever shut up?" Quackity bickered back.

Niki and Shubble were too busy throwing everything that they'd brought into the building into their respective bags to pay attention. Foolish had plenty of time to look at them questioningly.

"If you had the disguise, why did we have to go through the whole acting thing?" Foolish asked.

"Well, the day was slow when you came in," Charlie said. "They might figure out the whole disguise thing. But in the panic of the alarms and everything, they might just be frazzled enough to not pay attention."

"Do you think we have time to get to the fourth floor?" Niki questioned as they waited for the elevator to pick them up. "Are they going to be in the elevator when it opens?"

"No, I've blocked elevator A from operations all of today," Charlie told them. "We'll go straight to the first floor and then it's just through the lockdown in the lobby and we're home free."

"*Just* a lockdown in the lobby?" Foolish said. "That doesn't sound like *just*."

"It'll go smoothly as long as we follow the plan," Charlie said. "Hopefully. You guys know the plan right?"

"Which plan is this?" Wilbur asked.

"Plan E," Charlie replied.

"Is that the one where I pass out?" Shubble tried to remember the half a dozen plans that they went over before today.

"Well, are you the better scream actor, or is Niki?" Charlie asked as they stepped into the empty elevator A.

"Best two out of three?" Niki offered, holding her hand out in a fist.

Foolish is constantly shocked at how any of these people are able to work in such tense conditions. Not to mention the fact that the alarm simply doesn't stop in the elevator, putting the whole building on high alert, and yet they have time to decide who's going to pretend faint with a game of rocks, papers, and scissors.

"Guess I'm fainting," Niki said. "Don't drop me, you two," She warned Quackity and Wilbur.

"I've got you," Wilbur said, positioning himself behind Niki, watching closely as the numbers on the elevator display get closer to the ground floor.

"Wait," Foolish said. "Which one is plan E? What's plan E?" He asked in a panic.

"Great, just keep that whole confused and panic attitude up," Charlie said. "You'll be great."

Foolish didn't get his answer before the elevator opened up and he was faced with Herobrine agents running toward the stairwells, across the lobby, and into elevator B. Within this time, Niki had already gone all the way limp, Wilbur's arms supporting her under her arms, holding up her body weight. Quackity picked up her feet, and both of them went into motion to carry Niki out of the elevator.

"Get out of the way! Get out of the-" Shubble frantically yelled.

"Agent Slime-" One of the guards said, looking shocked when he saw the events unrolling before his eyes. It was good to note that numerous agents ran past them not giving them a second look before heading toward the elevators.

"Open the door," Charlie commanded.

"Sir, we're in the middle of a lockdown, we-" The security guard tried to explain.

"She needs fresh air," Shubble barked louder.

"I'm sorry ma'am, I'm afraid it's just not possible. We're in the middle of a lockdown, there's-" But before the security guard could reply, Charlie had already cut him off.

"There's an override to the lockdown, you know there's an override. We need to get her out of here," Charlie said.

"But agent Slime, we're not authorized-"

"She hit her head when she passed out, if she doesn't wake up soon, we're going to need to get her to the hospital," Foolish chimed in. "There's no saying if there's intracranial bleeding- If it cuts off her cerebral blood flow, that could lead to permanent brain damage. And we don't even know where to begin, it could be loss of speech or loss of motor function- Paralysis is lucky we could be looking at death or worse-"

"Open the door," Shubble screamed.

At this point, there really wasn't anything the guard could do while being pressured by more than a few frantic people. He conceded, and not long after the group heard a buzz, and Charlie pushed the door open, letting the group out.

They continued to carry Niki until they turned a corner before she opened her eyes again as they set her on the ground.

"Worse than death?" Niki asked Foolish. "I was getting scared and I'm not actually injured, that was some good acting!" She complimented.

"Well, medical things I know how to lie about," Foolish sighed in relief. "I can't believe that worked."

"Right, celebration later, my car now," Charlie interrupted, pointing towards a black SUV parked nearby the road.

"You wanna take the Herobrine assigned SUV?" Foolish asked.

"I've fed it the wrong GPS location, and no one's gonna stop the car because it's Herobrine's," Charlie said. "It's the perfect escape plan."

"I don't know what we would do without you Charlie," Quackity chuckled.

"I'm not driving so," Charlie tossed the keys to Quackity, as everyone began to climb into the car. Quackity would rather literally anyone else sitting shotgun, but Wilbur got in next to him and Quackity could only inhale sharply.

"Don't drive too fast," Wilbur commented even before Quackity started the car. "We wanna make a swift getaway but we can't do that if we're getting pulled over by the police."

"Are you going to be backseat driving the entire time, because if that's the case, I'm going to drive us off the Golden Gate Bridge," Quackity said as he is pulling out into the street.

"Golden Gate Bridge is in San Francisco not San Diego, you idiot," Wilbur sneered.

"I swear to god, Wilbur-"

Portland

"I told you this was stupid," Sapnap said, climbing back out onto the platform lift. "This was a stupid entry and a stupid exit. Plus you're stupid for taking that goddamn file, now we're all on a run."

"We'll save more time if you stop complaining, we just need to get down to street level and we're free," Eret said. "I've planned for this. They'll spend a bit of time figuring out who to look for before realizing that they need to get us outside. That's 35 more seconds to turn off the lockdown that they've put on the building, locking themselves in, before they can even get out to fight us."

"Beast, you're coming with us?" Skeppy asked.

"Well I'm not going to be standing alone in the server hallway when they barge in to find who broke their server," Jimmy replied.

Ranboo waited until everyone, and that is a total of 6 people now standing on the window-washing platform, before pulling the lever and lowering them back down into the street. You would think that due to gravity, it would be much easier to lower people down than carry them up, but in reality, dropping people at high speed is much more dangerous than lifting them.

And so the ride down felt like forever, and it was.

"Fifteen," Ranboo said, keeping a close eye on the level that they were at.

"Good lord," Sapnap wasn't at all pleased.

"Thirteen," Ranboo muttered, carefully navigating the controls. "We'll be down in no time, don't worry about it Sapnap."

"Keep saying that, I'll believe it when it happens," Sapnap muttered.

"You're a ray of sunshine, aren't you?" Beast said playfully. "Karl must love that about you," He teased.

"I have a bad feeling about this," Sapnap told him. "Not to mention I don't particularly trust her either. There's something she's hiding," He gave Eret a pointed look.

"Hey, *she* is right here, and *she* can hear you," Eret rolled her eyes. "She *might* be hiding something, but she does it for her own reasons."

"Ten," Ranboo said.

"Uh, guys?" Aimsey piped up after a long time of being quiet.

Their conversation was quickly interrupted by the loud noise of something hitting the metal of their lift with a clang. By the way the impact sparked against the metal, they could only assume it was a flying bullet.

"You miscalculated," Aimsey said, hanging his head off the lift to get a good view of the scene unfolding in the street. He pulled out his gun and sent off a few flying shots to the streets.

"I thought your team doesn't let minors have weapons!" Skeppy yelled, pulling Aimsey back into the lift and away from the few more bullets shooting their way.

"I'm short, I'm not a minor," Aimsey huffed, reloading her handgun before shooting back toward people on the street.

The lift came to a very unpleasant and shaky stop, suspending 6 people on the eighth floor. The group of them tried to peak over the side of the lift only to see a few Herobrine agents turning off the central power on the ground for their lift, much like Sapnap's paranoid rambles said would happen. They had to quickly duck back into the safety of their platform to shield themselves from bullets.

"I did not miscalculate," Eret said.

"Oh, so you planned for this?" Sapnap asked angrily.

Sapnap begrudgingly pulled out his gun and shooting warning shots onto the ground. He needed them to stop, but he didn't want to kill Herobrine agents. Not when he doesn't know which ones of them deserved it and which ones don't.

"Yes, I did," Eret said.

Suddenly the platform started moving again and the shower of bullets decreased. Sapnap looked shocked, admittedly, but Eret didn't even flinch. Something about the look on Eret's face made Sapnap's heartrate rise up and told him that he wouldn't like what he saw.

Sapnap peaked his head up and over the railing to see what was happening on the ground. There were more than a few new players that have come into the picture, fighting off Herbrine agents and putting a stop to more agents going out into the street. There was a central figure, however, in the middle of it all, the same figure that probably turned their lift back on. If Sapnap didn't recognize him by his blonde hair, Sapnap definitely recognized him by his distinct combat style that Sapnap knew all too well.

"You son of a bitch," Sapnap spat and before his head caught up to him, his fist was already flying first to Eret's face.

It was a loud thwack that pulled everyone's attention in the lift towards a secondary issue that is not the people shooting at them. Skeppy and Ranboo were quick to put themselves in between them before Eret had a chance to retaliate and hit Sapnap across the face, Eret being a purveyor of the hit first, ask questions later kind of person. They were thankful that they didn't need to worry about bullets flying at them for the moment as the shower stopped.

"What the fuck do you think you're doing?" Eret spat, even though it was clear he knew why.

"You're a piece of shit, you know that?" Sapnap said. "He's gonna get killed."

"Keep it together," Ranboo scolded. "We have three more floors."

"Sapnap," Skeppy called, turning Sapnap's body to look away from Eret in the hopes that his anger will simmer down. "Relax. What- Just-" The older man was still at a loss for words over what he could even say to his younger friend.

It didn't take long for the lift to stop and Ranboo opened the gates to let them out. Eret stepped off, clearly still angry but would prefer to leave that for later, unlike the explosive Sapnap. Sapnap jumped into the street not long after and if it weren't for Skeppy's warning voice, he would've jumped Eret right there and then.

Aimsey and Beast were equally stunned and horrified, not only at the sudden fight within their little group but also at the pile of Herobrine agents on the street side.

"What-" Aimsey muttered, looking around them. "-the fuck?"

"Let's go," Punz clapped his hands loudly. "My people can't stop the agents from leaving the building for much longer, we gotta get you guys out of here."

Sapnap felt both of Punz's hands on his shoulder, pulling him towards a large black local PD CSI van, opening the door before telling everyone to get in.

"I'll drive," Ranboo was quick to volunteer and Punz tossed his keys to him.

Sapnap could see figures in masks, clothed in all black, fighting Herobrine agents just by the entrance and lobby of the headquarters. They weren't as easily recognizable but Sapnap almost want to make an educated guess about who they were. The faster the van leaves, the faster they can leave too, and with that Sapnap closed the van doors.

"Go, go," Sapnap said but Ranboo had already stepped on the gas even before the door fully closed.

"I was expecting a warmer welcome, but that's okay," Punz muttered after a long period of silence, Sapnap not willing to meet his eyes. "I'll take what I can get."

"Why did you call him?" Sapnap turned to Eret instead.

"I would also like to be talked *to* not talked *about*, but I'll deal with that also," Punz mumbled, giving Skeppy a helpless look.

"Oh so now you want to ask questions?" Eret hummed. "I thought you'd rather punch your way to an answer, I guess my cheek was mistaken."

"You had no right to call him, he's not one of your contacts, he's not one of your recruits. Punz is not-" Sapnap berated.

"I called him like three days ago. I explained to him and asked him to join us. That's how recruitment works," Eret said. "He's been helping you with this mission, I thought it was time to officially invite him in and he was more than willing to jump and do whatever he can to help you-

"Okay, well-" Punz scoffed. "That's-

"And once he knew we had his brother," Eret continued. "It seemed stupid not to reach out. It was easy."

Sapnap's jaw was tense, clenching hard as he finally met Punz's eyes. There was a small smile on Punz's face, and only then did Sapnap relax.

"C'mon," Punz's voice was trying to coax Sapnap to smile. "Just because we know I'm not your soulmate now, doesn't mean I'm not gonna be there for you baby boy."

"Baby boy?" Ranboo exclaimed loudly from the driver's seat.

"Soulmate?" Skeppy questioned. "We? Know?"

Sapnap would like to die.

"Oh yeah, sorry-" Punz rambled before Sapnap could even stop him. "I shouldn't be calling you baby boy anymore, you've got a soulmate," He turned and tilted his head at Skeppy. "It's not you though, right? It was someone else from your team."

"I thought you said you and Karl never tried?" Aimsey said. "You don't know if you guys are soulmates."

"Is that his name? Karl?" Punz asked. "He shot me- Well, he tried to, and-

"Karl doesn't shoot," Jimmy interjected. "Well, he tries, but Karl's not a field agent."

Sapnap didn't know what to do. He'd almost consider asking Eret to kill him just to put him out of

his misery. But when Sapnap saw the smile on Eret's face, he knew the clever criminal had already put 2 and 2 together too quickly, understanding Punz's offhand comment far beyond the rest of the car. And by the way, his lip curved as he kept his gaze on Sapnap, Sapnap knew Eret only needed to shut up for everything to unravel itself. Almost like karmic revenge was after Sapnap's ass that day. Maybe he shouldn't have punched Eret.

"You know he's your soulmate right?" Punz asked. "Or was I the only one that saw that, and you completely missed it? He shot you, on the ship, when you were pushing me out of the way."

"Karl wasn't on the ship," Ranboo said. "Karl was in the van."

"Now that sounds more like Karl," Jimmy said.

Sapnap noticed the way Skeppy grew quiet, nervously glancing at Sapnap but couldn't maintain the gaze. Eret stayed still, closing her eyes much like she was going to sleep in the middle of all the chaos, but the smile stayed on her face.

Sapnap should've lied. He should've lied faster, he should've lied before Punz even said anything, he should deny, deny, deny, but he was too shocked to do anything. And that's when it unraveled.

"You know who your soulmate is," Beast was quick to connect the dots. "And it's not Karl, is it?"

"Plot twist," Aimsey mumbled. Ranboo's long handswatted at her. "Sorry, sorry, bad timing, bad timing."

"Look, that wasn't-" Sapnap couldn't help his stuttering voice

"Does Karl know?" Beast questioned, this time his voice a little more stern than the usually cheery tone that he'd gotten to know earlier that day.

"Maybe we don't talk about his, soulmates are awfully personal and-" Skeppy cleared his throat, trying his best to divert the conversation and offer Sapnap a little bit of help, but it did not work.

"Right," Beast was quick to jump into, arguably, a rash but correct conclusion.

Of course, it didn't work. Sapnap couldn't possibly be that lucky.

"Maybe I was wrong," Punz said, trying to defuse the tension he'd inadvertently created.

"Look, it's not what you think it is," Sapnap's words were pointed at Beast who looked at him with a gaze easily described as a man looking at absolute filth. Part of Sapnap is happy Karl had such supportive friends, and the other part absolutely understands that he'd fucked up. There was no way out.

"You don't have to explain to me, frankly, I don't care," Beast said, his words too snippy for anyone's liking. "But he deserves to know. And if you don't tell him, I will."

Sapnap didn't know how long it had been since he'd stopped breathing but it was a while. The air was trapped in his lungs the same way the pounding in his ear hasn't gone away. The inside of his cheeks was bleeding at how much he'd bitten down on them and Sapnap still couldn't move.

"I can't wait to get back to Austin," Eret chirped happily.

Rayleigh

"We should start now," Karl said the second Ponk hung up the phone. "They're on high alert and we need 10 minutes, minimum."

In the midst of all the panic and chaos, none of the three of them were keeping an eye on the security cameras, causing them to jump when Tubbo slammed the door open.

"We heard," Tubbo declared. "It's a go? We have to go now?"

"We have to go five minutes ago, but now works fine too," Ponk explained.

"Hi, I'm Tina," Tina softly introduced herself as Tubbo and Fundy ran past her and into the back rooms with the main computer.

"Nice to meet you, Tina," Fundy yelled. "Can you set a timer for 10 minutes exactly starting from now?" His voice echoed as he's gone away.

"I'm Tubbo!" Tubbo called out. Probably shouldn't be yelling his codename out loud but they were in the middle of something that needed all his brain power.

It was quick. The mission team and Rayleigh had the easiest job, by far, and that wasn't by a coincidence. It was purposeful that Eret had placed all their techiest people into the Rayleigh job, considering it's the most intensive task. But also nothing ever happens in Rayleigh. The security at the Archive was a joke and it was honestly a bit of a stretch to think about protecting the Archive after the four tower break-ins. Their first thought would more so be the other facilities. But still, they had to work quickly and get out of there as soon as possible.

Tina remained on the lookout, her only job was letting them in (again, not the most difficult task as it does not involve ziplining, grifting, costumes, or a window washing lift), letting them use her login credentials, as Karl's would be a high risk, and keep watch.

Ponk and Karl went onto the computer, and their job was to scrub the archive clean. Not only that, but Ponk has made it his mission to not only uninstall his search algorithm but dismantle it to the point where only he would be able to get it running again.

Fundy and Tubbo had a separate job of receiving the files that they'd gotten from Bad's laptop specifically, preparing for the havoc launch that is releasing all the information they have into the world. Well, all the information aside for files of the people on their *don't expose* list. Those people included everyone in their circle and a few others.

"No, not that one," Fundy told Tubbo. "Not Eret's file."

"Got it, got it," Tubbo said, not even a pause in his furious typing.

"How much more time do we have?" Karl asked.

"Five minutes twelve seconds," Tina replied, checking the timer she'd set.

"Oh, I need at least five minutes, I might not make it," Ponk said.

"Well you have a spare 12 seconds," Fundy said. "I can't stop what's gonna happen."

"W-what's gonna happen?" Tina said.

"Tina, can you remind me when we have 1 minute to go?" Ponk requested.

Tina was about to answer, her eyes still fixated on the ticking time in her phone's clock app, before the phone vibrated, taking the numbers away and replacing them with a call screen.

"Oh, oh, they're calling me," Tina panicked, throwing her phone onto the table, and letting it buzz continuously against the table.

"Who's calling you?" Karl asked.

"Them, *them*," Tina freaked out. "If I don't pick up they might think something is wrong!"

"If you pick up they'll definitely know something is wrong," Tubbo stated.

"Leave it to voice mail," Ponk instructed.

Tina stared at her phone until the call screen went away. She quickly picked the phone up again, looking at the time ticking down.

"Two minutes," Tina said.

"I'm going as fast as I can," Ponk's voice was a little harsh. "I'm almost done though. How's everyone doing?"

"One last line," Karl replied, his voice drawled out.

"I'm done, I'm almost done," Tubbo chimed in.

"Done or almost done, Tubbo, those are two different things," Fundy said, finishing off his typing before standing up and walking over towards Tina. "I'm done, how much time do we have?"

"Ninety seconds," Tina replied.

"Done, done," Karl raised both his hands up like he was sitting in an exam and his proctor just said pencils down. He looked at Tina, who continued to stare at her phone nervously as the time ticked down.

"Done," Fundy said. "Tubbo, Ponk, you need to be faster or else we're not gonna make it," He said, checking his phone. "I just got the alert for 60 seconds."

"But it's not 60 seconds," Tina said confusedly, the timer on her phone still at around the 70s.

"Well, he's not waiting," Fundy said vaguely. "Fifty-five seconds."

"Who's not waiting?" Tina asked.

"I'm done, I'm done," Tubbo finally said, slamming his laptop close and unplugging it from the ethernet, quickly storing the laptop in his bag. "We're all set to run out of here?"

"C'mon Ponk," Fundy urged impatiently.

"Thirty-five seconds," Tina said.

"All I need is 20," Ponk said. "Get to the door."

"Ponk-" Karl said.

The tension in the room was thick and getting thicker with every second that ticks. It was hushed whispers, Fundy telling Karl and Tubbo to run towards the door and out first, him staying behind to wait for Ponk. Tina stood there, her eyes still trained on the stopwatch.

"Are you almost done?" Tina asked timidly. "Because you're down to 17 seconds. Fifteen."

"Well then I need 5 more," Ponk said. "Maybe 10."

"Ponk," Fundy warned. "Tubbo, Karl, get out of here."

With that one last command, Tubbo and Karl left out the front door.

"Tina, you should too," Fundy said.

"You got 8 seconds," Tina said, nodding, but leaving just after.

"Seven," Fundy mumbled softly. "Six, five."

"Alright, alright," Ponk said, though his fingers hasn't stopped. "Get out of here Fundy."

"Four, three," Fundy continued.

"Shut up, I said get out of here," Ponk barked.

"One," Fundy said.

And just like that, the whole building flickered and turned off. The room and hallway went dark, every single background noise from the whirring electronics to the fans, and the vents shut down. Ponk and Fundy were left in the dark and silence.

"Fuck," Fundy cursed. "Did you make it?"

"Of course I did," Ponk sighed. "How dare you doubt me?" He smirked.

Even through the darkness, you could see Fundy's smile through the dark. Ponk threw his laptop in his bag, immediately running out behind Fundy into the parking lot. The other three were standing by the door, looking inside.

"A blackout?" Tina said. "You didn't tell me you were going to cause a blackout."

"That's courtesy of him," Fundy nodded towards the van. "Well, and Techno."

"You didn't tell me there were two other people," Tina commented, but Karl looked just as confused as she did.

"Who's in the van?" Karl asked as they all walked towards the van. "And I know Techno's not here."

"Techno's more of a social construct," Fundy replied, waving his hand lightly. "That's our getaway driver, we needed somebody to cover our tracks in case we failed, so he's simultaneously back up."

"You guys took forever," The person inside the van immediately said the second they opened the door. "Let's get out of here."

"You couldn't give me a few more seconds?" Ponk said playfully.

"I didn't think you'd be so slow," The person shrugged. "Nice to meet you too, by the way. I'm 5Up," He said, starting the van. "Let's get out of here."

Austin

When Karl's got to the tarmac in Austin, it was evident that his group was the last one to get there. This was probably because they were the only ones who could still fly commercial (thank you 5Up

and all his work making fake IDs and scrubbing their faces off the no-fly list) and had through go through all the normal people channels, airport security, and baggage claim. (That was Tubbo's fault.)

The car rolled to a stop, surrounded by 4 planes, two of which were much bigger and the other two much smaller. But before Karl could open the door to step out, he could already see his friends (and adjacent) walking towards them. Well, some of them at least, as the number of their group now is much closer to 2 dozen people.

"Thank god you're okay, we didn't hear anything from you," Sam said immediately, the look of relief evident on his face. "I was so worried."

Ponk wasn't the only one shocked when Sam pulled him into somewhat of an involuntary hug. He tried for a few seconds to fight it, to push him away, but he'd forgotten how easy it was to fall into familiar arms, breathing in a very familiar scent.

"When 5Up set off the EMF pulse to take out the Archive, my phone was collateral," Ponk explained softly, muffled into Sam's shoulder. "And then we were on a plane."

"5Up what did I tell you about the EMF bomb?" Wilbur shook his head disapprovingly.

"Your brother was the one who gave it to me," 5Up raised both his hands up mischievously. Fundy smiled fondly at him, bumping shoulders with him.

"We're glad you're safe, we had no word coming from your team," Foolish said.

Karl was quickly attacked by Sapnap, pulling him into a very tight squeeze, his hands holding Karl's head against his shoulder.

"Sapnap, I'm fine," Karl managed to chuckle. "We weren't exactly doing the most dangerous part. We're okay."

"Yeah," Sapnap's breath was shaky. "Yeah, sorry," He cleared his throat before stepping back from Karl. "I'm sorry."

"It's fine," Karl laughed, his eyebrows scrunched and his head tilted as he looked confusingly at Sapnap. "You're just worried, it's sweet. And I liked the hug."

"Right," Sapnap said, giving Karl a soft smile.

"Come on, let's go wait inside the hangar," George declared after giving Karl a soft pat on the back. "Away from potential satellite cams that are actively trying to find us around the world."

"What are we waiting for?" Tina asked.

"The end of the world," Eret replied from his seat on top of a table.

"And what does that mean?" Foolish asked.

"It means everybody settle in," Dream rolled his eyes at Eret's dramatic tendencies. "Right now every single dirty little secret Herobrine has is out on the Internet. And along with that, every single government official and world leader, including and especially the UN, has their eyes peeled open and reading those secrets. We just have to wait for the aftermath before making our next move."

"We got eyes on the news, on computers, police radios, everything, really. We'll know first thing if and when something happens," Wilbur said.

It was a pretty uncomfortable setup, seeing how they're about two and a half dozen people laying low in an empty hangar. It was cheap plastic office chairs, and a case of water bottles, and that was about it.

To be honest, it looked a little more like one of those speed dating events with people getting to know people and meeting other people from other teams. It was quite bizarre. But they had a common goal, so it wasn't like they didn't have a topic of conversation.

"Who's that?" Karl asked, holding Sapnap's hand gently. "The one signing to George."

"That's Callahan. He was in our class, he's mine and Dream's really close friend, super engineer-y,"

Sapnap explains. "You'd like him."

"Is he deaf or-" Karl asked. "Because my friend Tina signs, and- well, seems like she found his way to him," He laughed gently at Tina already excitedly striking up a conversation with Callahan.

"Just non-verbal actually," Sapnap told him.

"What about that one? The guy Quackity's talking to?" Karl asked.

Sapnap's heart dropped to the pit of his stomach. He didn't need to look to know exactly who Quackity was talking to. In fact, he knew exactly who it was as he was the one who introduced the two.

Not for the best circumstances. But there are things that they needed to talk about.

"That's uhm- That's-" Sapnap inhaled sharply. Karl noticed. "That's Punz."

"Punz?" Karl questioned. "Like your-" The words felt sour on Karl's tongue. The word 'your' was the biggest offender, the only descriptor he could think of was 'your Punz'. He settled for something else. "Your friend Punz? I didn't think he would- doesn't he work for Davenport?"

"Eret recruited him," Sapnap said. "I don't know. He, I guess-"

"Yeah, no, sure," Karl shook his head as if trying to ignore a glaring problem.

Little did he know, a bigger problem would be coming.

"Oh, speaking of friends! Beast is here, right? You were with Jimmy," Karl said, in a desperate attempt to steer away from a topic neither of them wanted to continue on. "How is he? How are you? I thought you guys might get along, did you?"

"Karl," Jimmy's voice was loud across the hangar catching both Sapnap's and Karl's attention.

And that was the bigger problem.

"Karl, I-" Sapnap stuttered.

It seems that Jimmy's voice didn't only get Karl's and Sapnap's attention, as Quackity and Punz seemed to be coming their way. Jimmy was walking in their direction and Sapnap felt his heart bumping against his throat.

Jimmy had given him a choice. Tell Karl or he will. He will never blame Karl for having friends who cared enough to be protective of him. But this fucking sucks.

"Karl," Jimmy said. "Hey man."

"Jimmy," Karl gleamed, pulling his friend into a hug. "Never thought you'd see me in the field, huh? I think I'm doing pretty good though, I think you'd be proud to see what I've done in the last few weeks. You've met my boyfriend, right?"

"Yeah," Jimmy said easily. "Yes, I have. He's got something he'd like to tell you."

"Look, Jimmy-" Quackity interjected, trying to get Jimmy's attention away.

"Oh no, you've done enough," Jimmy said decidedly. "And you too," He looked at Punz before Punz even said anything.

"What's going on?" Karl asked a little nervous laughter on his lips.

"I-" The words died out in Sapnap's mouth.

"Sapnap?" Karl called, reaching his hand out to touch Sapnap. "What's wrong?"

"I uh-" Sapnap gulped. His palms were sweaty and instinctively pulled away from Karl's touch.

"He needs to know," Jimmy said. "Better from you than from me."

"What? What does that mean?" Karl asked. "Jimmy, what are you talking about?"

"Karl, I'm-" Sapnap couldn't string more than 2 words together. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry."

The hangar had gone quiet, and it seems like they'd garnered a lot of attention. Sapnap never meant for this to happen.

"Look, Karlos-" Quackity started.

"He's not your soulmate."

It was an entirely different voice with a familiar condescending tone and a coldness unmatched by anyone else in the vicinity that replied. All heads turned to Eret.

"Sapnap is Quackity's soulmate and vice versa. They found out when we raided the ship, that one time, and they accidentally shot each other, I'm not sure which one. But one of them shot the other while in the middle of a fight with that-" Eret rattled off, pointing at Punz. "-gentleman right there."

The silence was so loud you could hear a pin drop.

"Sapnap was trying to protect Punz, I think they think they were soulmates, plot twist, they're not," Eret said. "He didn't want to hurt your feelings or maybe he's scared you'd break up with him if you knew he wasn't your soulmate, so both of them have been keeping it their little secret."

"Both-" The whisper from Karl's mouth was weak. "Both of them?" He looked back at Quackity and Sapnap, both with an equally guilty look.

"Wow, you are an *asshole*," Punz chimed in.

"We have infinitely bigger problems and you guys were taking too much time for personal problems," Eret said. "Besides, you were the first domino piece."

"Karl-" Sapnap reached out, but before he could catch Karl's hand, the older man drew his hand away. Sapnap didn't think he could ever feel such a cold stare but the look from Karl's eyes sent icicles through his whole body.

Karl walked away without another word. Tina, Jimmy, and Corpse followed close behind, whispering amongst themselves, knowing full well Karl was not in the mood to talk. But still, he may want company.

"Are we done? Can we get back to business?" Eret said.

"Fuck you, Eret," Dream muttered, shaking his head. He watched as George walked over to Sapnap, who was slowly being guided by Bad out of the hangar, Skeppy and Quackity close by.

"I didn't cause the problem," Eret said defensively. "Fuck, I wasn't even the one who gave the ultimatum. Jimmy was the one who gave him a deadline."

"Fuck you anyway," Dream huffed. He looked over, giving a little nod to George.

Unspoken, but the two knew what needed to happen. Dream needed to stay there with Eret, regardless of how much he wanted to be by Sapnap's side. He needed to be on point, and Sapnap has Bad and starting now, George, as a temporary replacement for comfort.

Dream was still seriously contemplating leaving Eret and Wilbur to plan alone for a few minutes, even just a few seconds to console Sapnap and Quackity, and also check in on Karl. But time was not on their side and his phone buzzed.

An unknown number but he knew it all too well.

46.3277° N, 19.1589° E

"Did you get a message?" Sam asked. Dream looked up at his phone and gave Sam a questioning

look. "I got one too."

Sam gave his phone to Dream and it was a different set of coordinates.

48.6283° N, 2.4711° E

"I'm kind of offended he didn't text me," Wilbur muttered.

"He texted me though, suck it, Wilby," Tommy exclaimed. "I'm his favorite not-brother."

41.1719° N, 15.1467° E

"I got one," Ranboo said.

50.8322° N, 20.6466° E

"God, why are all these fucking European?" Dream groaned.

"And they're really close together," Ponk said, quickly putting the coordinates into an available laptop.

"And also in the middle of fucking nowhere?" Fundy said.

"They are," Eret nodded confidently. "Because that's where they keep the planes."

"The planes," Puffy said. "You mean the- the planes? They already have the planes? For the giant weapons to kill people? Like random-normal-day-to-day people?"

Dream watched as Callahan signed a reply.

"Callahan can confirm, they have at least four planes," Dream translated. "Stored across the pond for safe keeping and away from FBI and CIA."

"That's bullshit," Tubbo responded. "I call bullshit."

"At least two of them are equipped with artillery," Dream continued to translate Callahan's sign. "He doesn't know about the other two or more."

"Well, we know what we need to do, right?" Charlie contributed in. "Just, get rid of the planes."

"Right, we split off into 4 teams, get rid of the planes, easy peasy. You guys probably have more allies in Europe right? That's where you were based, so-" Foolish was interrupted by Wilbur's phone buzzing.

"Oh, he didn't forget me after all," Wilbur said excitedly.

Wilbur's face fell when he saw that his text was a little different than everyone else's. His jaw clenched as he passed his phone to Eret, who took the message in before handing the phone to Dream.

*They want to talk to you
48.1007° N, 11.9318° E*

"Get everything together," Dream instructed. "Wheels up in 30."

Chapter End Notes

also, thank you very much for all the super nice comments

I recognize a lot of the usernames and I couldn't be more touched knowing you guys came back and still showing support!!

hope the journey was worth it in the end, two more chapters to go!!

you can comment and kudos if you want, I'm so grateful for all the support, and thank you guys very much

see you soon!

Chapter 14

Chapter Notes

CW: uhh graphic description of violence ??? sorry, it didn't use it on the rating because I didn't think I would write anything violent but it fit the chapter and the vibe so I had to, I will change the rating but I hope this is enough warning ??

not gonna say much else, enjoy the chapter !!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Dream was alone.

He should not be; lord knows he should not be alone under any and all circumstances, yet here he was. Walking into a warehouse somewhere in Germany, alone in the middle of nowhere.

Granted the coordinates that he'd received should've sent him somewhere in Hungary, not that that's any better, but the words *'They want to talk to you'* seem like a more pressing matter that Dream frankly doesn't trust either Eret or Wilbur to handle on their own. Especially knowing what he knows about all their connections to Herobrine.

So in he goes. Alone.

"You're not who I sent for," Davenport's voice echoed through the empty warehouse.

"That offends me," Dream replied. "I'm hurt. Am I not enough for you?"

"Didn't think you'd have the balls, honestly," Davenport said.

"Didn't have the balls for what?" Dream asked. "Put the whole underground world on blast?"

"Honestly, yeah," Davenport laughed. "He didn't think you had the guts," He nudged his head toward the shadows from which another figure walked out.

"God, you're like a cockroach," Dream spat disgustedly when he recognized the face of his former boss looking right at him. The face that still had remnants of being beaten and injured, courtesy of Dream. "You ever step on a cockroach and then they keep walking? Even worse if they start flying- That's exactly what you are."

"Are you done?" Galecki asked.

"He even looks like one, don't you think he looks like one?" Dream looked at Davenport who only kept an amused smile.

"You're funny," Davenport said. "I'll give you that. It'll be a shame you won't be able to crack jokes when you're dead."

Dream pursed his lips, looking down before spotting two red dots on his chest.

"Shame," Dream agreed. "But you know, before you kill me-" He continued talking, his arms cross in front of his chest. "Won't you do me a favor and you know- we can trade information."

"We don't need information," Galecki spat.

"Oh come on," Dream coaxed playfully. "How else are you going to find all our agents?"

"You think we don't know you have people outside? Staking all around the grounds, up in a tree?" Galecki said. "Some of them are trying to break into our warehouses, I know you got a tip, coordinates."

"Well looks like you did a shit job at trying to protect whatever it is you thought was yours," Dream said. "How about the Prodigal Son? I can get you to him."

"He's outside," Galecki replied.

"See, I knew I shouldn't have used her as the first bargaining chip, it never works," Dream shook his head at himself. "How about the algorithm? We wiped that all clean from your Texas HQ. So, you've got the planes, you've got the guns, though-" Dream chuckled. "Not all of the guns, sorry

not sorry, for that ship from Somalia that we raided."

"That wasn't our only shipment," Galecki said. "We've got guns from Belarus and Romania. Closer, around Europe."

"Belarus and Romania huh?" Dream hummed. "Okay, okay, but still, you don't have the algorithm at all. What are you gonna do? Shoot down random citizens?"

"Yes," Davenport said.

Dream all but stiffened a little, looking at Davenport in his dark cold eyes.

"All you did was simply take the algorithm that was going to, frankly, spare the people that we deemed not important enough," Davenport said. "We have no problem killing innocents, now they're just collateral damage. Bullets are cheap."

"But you have the world's eyes on you," Dream said. "Since we just aired out your dirty laundry. You know, I heard the UN isn't quite happy with all of this, they're running around trying to find the people responsible for just about all the cover-ups that you took part in the past few years and some. We have a drafted letter on very official Herobrine stationary that we're gonna put in the mail and ship off, if that's alright with you, of course, *boss*," The cheeky smile on his face was the most punchable he's ever looked.

"You mean-" Davenport hummed. "The things *you're* responsible for?"

"Oh I love this," Dream said excitedly. "You're gonna try to pin it on me? Is that it?"

"Nah," Davenport shook his head. "You're not the type. I'm more likely to pin it on- What was that guy's name? The guy pinned everything on a few years ago, Galecki?"

"Philza," Dream was the one who replied, his voice cold and sharp. "His name was Philza. It was six years ago."

"Perfect scapegoat," Galecki agreed. "Aren't we being nice? We're letting you off the hook."

"Well, not completely," Davenport mumbled. "Of course, we can't have a bunch of people running around trying to tell the UN that it *wasn't* Philza and pulling more stunts. So we're gonna have to kill you. Still."

"Huh," Dream said. "Is that your plan? Kill us."

"That's the gist," Davenport confessed. "Didn't think it'd be that easy. I'd love it even more if Eret or Wilbur and the other lot had walked in here and you know, we can just shoot you all down in one go. But we'll get everyone eventually, don't worry about it."

"There's gotta be something you want from me," Dream continued to talk. "Oh, oh. The Crown stamped weapons."

Both Davenport and Galecki stopped.

"Gotcha," Dream gleamed. "I can get you that. All of it. The weapons, the plans, the designer."

"For what?" Galecki said. "We are not letting you walk out of here alive, so why would you want to give that information up?"

"Curiosity," Dream shrugged. "This is what I've gathered, feel free to stop me if I'm wrong. It's you, Hutton, Wouters, and Cardoso, as the big dogs I'm guessing, you're the ones that got rid of Philza and got into bed with Davenport. And then a few others, like Ionescu, Aliyev, Jayasuriya, Pekh, Mai, Saunders- They're a little late in the game but they help you cover things up for a cut, facilitate communications, pay off local police. Am I missing anyone else?"

"Yeah, you're missing a few people," Galecki answered, amused more than anything.

"Well yeah, I know that. I was just talking about the main players. Like the put-you-in-international-jail criminals, not like random workers that have accepted bribes. Though we have that list, it's actually a really long list-" Dream rambled, his hands going down to reach into his pocket.

"Move and we shoot," Galecki said, and at that moment, even though he couldn't feel it, Dream

knew the red dot had traveled to his head.

"I was just going to get you that list, it's like a 3-page PDF," Dream said. "I could Airdrop it to you, and you can cross-check all the names-"

"What are you doing?" Davenport laughed. "Honestly."

"Satisfying my curiosity," Dream answered earnestly. "They say curiosity killed the cat and since I'm about to get killed, I thought at least I should get to know the answer, right? All the gritty details and all the plans, and world domination schemes."

Dream was about to talk some more when they were interrupted by a groan and a herd of footsteps walking into the warehouse.

"Found them in the bushes, boss, just like you said they would be," One of the half a dozen henchmen had dragged Eret into the warehouse, pushing them to stumble forward and end up next to Dream.

"What are you going here?" Dream sighed. "I told you to go away, you heard on my radio that they knew you were outside, why would you stay?" He scolded angrily.

"There were a dozen men outside, how was I supposed to escape?" Eret defended himself.

"This is why you suck and I hate working with you," Dream mocked.

"Oh, whatever," Eret scoffed. "Besides. I think I should get the opportunity to talk to the man who killed my father."

Dream stiffened. Dream froze, actually.

That was not in the plan. Dream didn't even know what the plan was anymore.

They had a plan. Oh, did you think Dream was just making conversation for fun? No, his job was

to stall. It was a gift, actually, the way Dream is able to keep talking and talking and talking and he seems to be able to get just about anyone to talk. Stall. While simultaneously getting as much information from them as he could, the admittance of guilt and conspiracy, all of which are being recorded through his comms. He was lucky that both Galecki and Davenport were in quite a chatty mood.

Sure, Eret can get caught, he was going to get caught at some point. And then they would stall and plans would keep going into motion, but Dream was not an actor. Frankly, he didn't know if this was improv, a lie, or a bluff.

Jesus, he didn't even know if it was the truth.

He didn't know that the Director of Herobrine was dead.

He wasn't.

Was he?

"Was it you? Galecki?" Eret tilted her head, eyes boring into Galecki's soul. "Or were you too scared, to look at the eyes of the man who gave you your first job, and drove you to the hospital when your wife went into labor, gave you that watch-" Eret said, the smile on her face likened Joker, putting everyone around her in an unsettling mood. "That watch that you're wearing right now, he gave you that watch for your 10-year anniversary in the office. I remember because I was there."

Dream thought that he'd seen the worst of Eret in any and all circumstances, but the chill in Eret's voice as he took no more than one step forward while being able to make Galecki take multiple steps back- This was something else.

"Was it you? Or were you too scared to shoot my father and kill him?" Eret asked. "I know you didn't plan it, it was him," They glance at a smiling Davenport. "He orchestrated the whole thing because you wouldn't have the balls, but I just wanted to know who sent the kill shot."

"Dream," The voice sounded far away. "What's happening in there?"

It took Dream a few seconds to snap out of the trance that was listening to Eret's voice before

realizing that Sapnap was trying to reach him through his comms.

"The director is dead?" Dream's voice was quiet, but enough for both Eret and Sapnap to hear.

"No way, no," Sapnap said. "We would've known. We should know-"

"Two years ago," Eret answered. "A little before my deliberate 2-year stint in Pandora's Vault."

"Wilbur?" Sapnap asked.

"She's telling the truth," Wilbur replied. "Part of their plan, all of it."

"They as in Eret or-" Bad questioned. "They as in-

"Him and his father," Wilbur clarified.

"You didn't think I'd be that easy to catch, or that easy to keep locked up, come on Dream," Eret said teasingly.

Dream was still hung up on the fact that the Director had been dead for two years and nobody knew. He didn't know. Neither did the world.

It was an absolute mindfuck, there were no other words to describe it.

To not know that a person has been gone for two years is absolutely insane. But then again, if Dream thought about it hard enough, no one has seen the director in two years. There hasn't been a single office party, gala, charity, work function, or retreat that the director has appeared at in the last two years. Dream knew what he looked like, Dream remembered meeting the director, back when Eret was still going through rookie training when Eret was still their friend.

Dream remembered reporting to the director when Eret got captured.

Unless he didn't.

It was more of a memo, a note that he sent because the director wasn't available for a verbal report. Dream had chucked it all up, at the time, to the fact that a father would not want to see his child arrested and it was probably an emotional time that shouldn't be disturbed. He was probably ashamed, and it was a fragile time. Dream ended up believing that Galecki would debrief the director on the outcome, that his child is now in Pandora's vault.

And then he'd heard, that the director visits Eret every once in a while, during his stay at Pandora's. Eret mentioned it, Sam mentioned it, and he didn't think that it could be a lie. Why would anyone lie about that?

A few reasons, it seems.

"Cardoso," Galecki replied.

"Ah, of course," Eret hummed, "Cardoso. Is that why she's the only one that's never visited Pandora in the last two years? Scared of me, is she?" He turned and walked. An odd situation it seems, how the table's been turned to look like Eret's the one that caught them, stalking around them like two prey in a trap. Though Galecki admittedly looked more like a deer in headlights next to the not-so-bothered Davenport. "She shouldn't be. At least she was brave enough to shoot my father, I can admire that."

"Whatever you think is happening today, Eret-" Davenport said.

"I don't need to hear from you, Schlatt," Eret replied snappishly.

"I think you do," Davenport replied. "Whatever you think is happening today, it's not happening. It's over, you're done. You've lost."

"I can never understand you, Schlatt," Eret shook his head, his eyes burned as tilted his head at Davenport questioningly.

"Eret-" Dream heard Tubbo's voice crackle through the comms.

"I don't know where you get the confidence or the audacity. Your motives, your lack of morals. You were doing good, you could be doing good," Eret continued on his rant.

"Eret!" Tubbo's voice called even louder.

"There was no reason to take it this far, you were okay, we were okay. All this started only because you wanted to take care of Tubbo-" Eret raised her voice.

"Eret, stop!" Tubbo yelled.

"And you haven't seen him in ages, you won't ever see him again-" Eret was shouting at this point.

"Don't you talk to me about Tubbo!" Davenport's voice boomed.

"And why the hell not?" Eret screamed. "God knows Wilbur is the one that's been taking care of him for the past few years. God, you're pathetic."

"Tubbo?" Dream called softly.

Dream was replied with silence in his comms. He noticed the way Eret gulped, visibly forcing himself to not turn around and look away from Davenport's eyes. If he thought the air was thick before, the tension was drowning.

Secrets.

Dream should know just by how much of the full mission he'd learned in the last two weeks, how many operatives, secret agents, undercovers, mystery allies, and connections that he didn't know but just found out existed in the past two weeks, like his very own friend Callahan, or how Sam's been involved, or how they were able to send over a dozen people a team to the other 4 coordinates with to take down the planes- The other four that they knew of, of course, nevermind the ones they didn't. Dream should know a thing or two about secrets from Eret, especially about this mission that he's apparently been planning for at least two years.

But nothing prepared him for how deep this goes.

"Tubbo?" Dream tried once again. "Are you okay?"

"Ask me again later, I need to sneak past these buffoons to get to their escape plane," Tubbo replied hastily.

Did you think the whole plan was just to have Dream and Eret chat with Davenport?

"How many do you got, George?" Quackity asked.

"Uh-" George muttered, shifting uncomfortably on his sniper's nest a distance away from the door of the warehouse, peering through his scope. He hated the way he could feel his shoulder twinge in pain, how his leg was already a little numb. He hated how he was shaking, but he couldn't tell if it was the cold Germanic air, tremors from his surgery, or just fear. That one was new. George had never been afraid to shoot before. "Old me? Seven. Maybe nine if I shoot through Dream a few times, but I'm not confident, so, let's keep it at a five."

"You *are* the old you," Karl replied. "Foolish said you're okay. A little tender, but you're healed. You should be able to shoot."

"Yeah, he's right," Foolish replied. "Just believe in yourse- That sounds cheesy, I heard it as soon as it left my mouth. You'll be fine."

"You can shoot through me," Dream muttered softly. "If you want to."

"*If you want to?* God, people in love are disgusting," Tommy gagged.

"On that note, there are 15 guards around the fifth plane," Ranboo said. "Me, Tubbo, and Tommy can sneak past them, but we're not so sure about taking them out. Me and Tommy might be able to do four each, Tubbo needs to focus on getting in the plane."

"Skeppy and I can take the East entrance, it's like 6? 7 of them?" Bad volunteered.

"Jesus, this place is crawling," Punz said. "I'll take the South side."

"How many in the South side?" Sam asked. "There's like 2, 4, 6-" He counted.

"All of them," Punz replied easily.

"All of them? You can't just-" Puffy interjected.

"I'll go with him so he doesn't die," Sapnap chimed in. "He's an idiot."

"I'll go with him, actually," Quackity coughed. "Punz won't need a lot of help, and I think you should help Sam bring Karl and Ponk over to the fifth plane. I won't be able to do it."

Don't even ask about how awkward the silence that followed that was.

"Sure, I can do that," Sapnap agreed.

"How many henchmen aren't accounted for?" Wilbur didn't have a great view to fully scope the area.

"Twenty-three," Tina replied. "Callahan said he can take both the snipers that are aiming at Dream and Eret so that Gogy nesting point doesn't get exposed, but that's all he could do since he'd have to travel."

"Fuck! The snipers," Sapnap cursed. "We forgot about the snipers."

"Since when do you call me Gogy?" George piped up.

"That's what you're focused on?" Tubbo said accusingly.

"Well!" Eret's voice boomed, rendering all communication silent.

It was getting a bit loud and they didn't realize that they haven't been paying attention to anything that was happening between Davenport, Galecki, Dream, and Eret. But Eret has undoubtedly noticed, and even if he was in front of the enemy, he still knew how to lead the team. Or at least he knew how to keep them focused and in line.

"I can take one sniper, Callahan can take the other, that way it won't matter if my nest is exposed, no one will be around to shoot me," George volunteered.

"*Unless someone gets you from behind,*" Tina piped up. "That was from Callahan."

"I'll take my chances," George said. "He can take one and then go back inside the warehouse and he can take 3 instead of one sniper, and that leaves us with."

"Eighteen," Dream coughed, covering his words. "I like those odds."

"What odds?" Galecki asked. "You like the odds of you not getting out of here?"

"I like the odds of you shutting the fuck up in the next hour or two," Dream replied. "Where is everyone, by the way? The other shitheads. Cardoso, Wouters, Aliyev, Pekh? I know Hutton is in Hungary and Mai is really the one that speaks a lick of French so I'm guessing she's in France."

"On their way," Davenport replied, standing uncomfortably close and stiff in front of Eret. "They should be here in-" He inhaled, checking his insanely expensive watch. "Well, they should be here right about now."

"What the fuck did he mean *now*?" Wilbur said.

The timing could not be better for Davenport and the situation could not have been worse for everyone else. It was not black SUVs that came rolling by, more like armored military vehicles that rolled by. Three, four- They were big and menacing, each of them carrying more than a handful of henchmen all armed with weapons looking not as exquisite and elegant as Techno's but just as brutal and dangerous.

"That's-" George stuttered, pulling back from peering into his scope. "That's a lot of people, that's a

lot of cars. That's a whole lot more people that aren't accounted for."

"It's not a party until everyone arrives," Davenport said, smiling wildly as faces that Dream regrettably and unfortunately recognizes as higher-ups of Herobrin step off the cars. "Come, come, we'll leave in 10."

"Leave?" Dream asked, failing to hide his gulp.

"We have a plane to catch," Davenport said. "Two, actually. But we've only got one plane here so another is leaving from Czech."

"Czech?" Dream repeated.

"Are you just gonna keep repeating what I say?" Davenport squinted his eyes suspiciously.

"Got it," Tina replied over the comms. "I'm investigating, we have a few eyes in Prague right now, but we don't know how if it's a regular plane or a death plane with guns-"

"Is it a regular plane? Like an airport commercial plane or do you have one more of those killer birds with no algorithm stashed somewhere in Czech?" Dream asked Davenport bluntly.

"Or you could just ask the supervillain, *I guess*?" Karl said bewilderedly.

"You really just want to know our plans, don't you?" Davenport laughed amusedly.

"Humor me," Dream said.

"Killer bird," Davenport replied. "Can't send a regular airplane to Vienna."

"Vienna?" Dream repeated.

"Again with the repeating of what I said, it's really annoying Agent Dream," Davenport said dramatically. "Stop that. I know you're scared because you're going to die and your friends are all trying to make a plan on how to strike us and how many people each of them can take down, who's going to take which side of the building, but suddenly now they're doing the math and they realize- Hey Pekh," Davenport gave one of the men Dream recognized a fistbump. "They are starting to realize they're outnumbered. Severely."

You would not believe the chill that went down everyone's spine.

"Hey J," Pekh replied before his gaze fell only on Dream. "Oh, I remember you. Top of our class, right?" Dream could only glare, definitely not going to entertain the idea of answering him. "God, I always hated you. Why is he still alive?"

"So Vienna?" Dream directed his question towards Davenport, ignoring one of his old batchmates.

"We're closer to Geneva, so-" Davenport shrugged. "Thought it would be fairer if we went to Geneva and they get Vienna, even though I really wanted to go to Vienna."

"Why is he still alive?" Pekh asked again.

"He's fun," Davenport snapped, making Pekh flinch backward. Clearly, he did not have the patients for his so-called partners or colleagues to question even his littlest moves. "Do you have a problem with how I do things, Pekh?"

"Geneva, Vienna," Dream stated, the hair at the back of his neck standing as he shivered.

He glanced over to Eret, who's been standing stoically, whispering under his breath into the comms to communicate with the rest of the team as discretely as possible while Dream was distracting Davenport. Eret noticed, looked back as the gears turned in his head and he realized why Dream looked petrified. And that's when everything fell into place.

"Geneva, Vienna," Eret said, confirming to Dream and yes, she had heard him, and yes, she knows what it means.

"Again, with the repeating," Davenport groaned. "What is it with you people? Yes. Geneva, Vienna. And then we're gonna go to Nairobi next, and they're going to go to New York."

"Fuck," Wilbur cursed loudly as he realized what Eret and Dream caught much much earlier.

"You can't attack the UN," Dream said. "You just- You can't."

"Can't is such a lousy word. I hate the word *can't*," Davenport spat. "I can do a lot of things."

"I can think of a few things you can't do," Eret quipped.

"Eret, I am warning you," Tubbo barked.

"Tubbo, just ignore them," Puffy said. "How close are you right now to taking down the plane?"

"Nowhere close! Not after the tanks rolled in, there are people everywhere!" Tubbo was yelling but it was very obvious that he was surrounded by enemies as he actually whispered yelling. "I can't get to the door."

"Okay, well, it's been fun, but we do have to go," Davenport said. Dream could've sworn his voice was somewhat apologetic. "So we're gonna kill you both, and then I'm going to get our people to sweep the radius and kill everyone else that we find, and then in about three hours, when our plane is flying over Geneva, you'll be able to see- Well," He winced. "You'll be dead, actually, so you won't be able to see, but the news will be able to see our little show, and yes, it will be a whole show with lights and a song. Oh, it's going to be great."

"We have to strike," George said. "That motherfucker, that Pekh guy is pulling a gun from his belt, he's gonna shoot Dream."

"George, stand down," Wilbur said. "Tubbo had to make sure the plane does not fly before we strike or they *will* leave, they *will* escape."

"I'm working on it, okay?" Tubbo said. "I just need a little time."

"We don't have time, Dream doesn't have time," George said panicked.

"George, stand down," Wilbur repeated.

"Pekh," Davenport called. "I know you've been itching, so, take care of him will you?"

"My pleasure," Pekh said.

George watched as Pekh pulled the gun and raised it to point the barrel straight at Dream's forehead.

"Tubbo," George called.

"I'm not done," Tubbo reiterated.

Pekh cocked the gun and-

"Wait-" Davenport said.

Pekh stopped, his finger resting ever so gently on the trigger. The air stilled.

"I am being rude, I forgot to offer Galecki," Davenport turned to the other man. "Galecki. This boy did beat you to a pulp. I'm sure Pekh will understand if you want to be the one who kills him. I'll let Pekh shoot the other one."

"I'm good," Galecki said.

"Oh, okay," Davenport mumbled softly. "I thought I was gonna feel really bad about that. Anyway, you can continue."

Pekh smiled and repositioned his hand. Dream closed his eyes.

Three.

Tw-

Dream felt a sting of pain against his forehead and a splatter of blood spraying his face.

There was ringing in his ear, which muffled out the chorus of shouting voices in front of him and in his comms. It took him only a few seconds to recover, and a smile curved on his lips.

I fucking love you, George.

"Dream!" He heard Sam's familiar voice call to him and within seconds the man was by his side shoving a handgun into the palm of his hands. "I know you almost died and I'd give you time to recover but there is no time to recover."

"I'm good," Dream said, the smile on his face was brighter than the fire coming from the flashes of the gunshots. He aimed and sent off three consecutive shots, taking two men in kevlar down. "I'm great."

"They're getting away, they're getting away," Skeppy yelled out. "Tubbo, they're coming your way."

"I'm not done, I'm not done," Tubbo replied frantically.

"I'm gonna go after them," Dream said. "George-"

"Clearing a path for you" George replied. Dream watched as two armed men running toward him fell, one clutching his stomach and the other their leg. "Go now, I got your 6."

"You always do," Dream smiled, dodging what little left of people charging at him that George, Sam, or Sapnap haven't taken out.

"Stop flirting, this is not the time," Tommy exclaimed furiously.

Neither George nor Dream could contain the little chuckle on their lips.

"Tubbo?" Eret called. "You need to keep us updated."

"I can't, okay?" Tubbo yelled out furiously. "I can't."

"Okay, Ranboo, keep us updated," Eret said.

"No, I meant I can't do it," Tubbo said. "People are-" A grunt. "-tying to- oi, fuck you!" Another grunt and a loud thump. "-kill us, and I can't even get-" A loud yell, thankfully not coming from Tubbo himself. "-near the door."

"I'm also a bit occupied," Ranboo chimed in. "If I'm being honest."

"Figure it out," Wilbur said. "Tubbo, you're the only one that can figure it out, and I need you to figure it out right now."

"I can't-" Tubbo's voice was desperate.

"Yes, you can," Ranboo said. Tubbo glanced up at his tall friend, panting, his mind racing in a thousand different directions. "I can get you to the door, how many minutes do you need to get in and do what you need to? I can bait them-"

"You will die," Tubbo said.

"Well then I'll bait them," Tommy said. "I'm much much faster, how long do you need?"

"I just need-" Tubbo's words faltered as his eyes met the figures running out of the warehouse.

It was more than a split second, the way he held Davenport's attention. The man stood there, unable to move, the man next to him who Tubbo recognized as Galecki pushing him and forcing

him to keep walking. Other familiar faces that Tubbo has seen from the numerous files that Eret had him help them sort through, but one remained still.

"We need help," Ranboo said in a panic. " You need to stop them, we still need time."

"Tubbo, get behind me," Tommy said, pulling Tubbo's arm and forcing himself to block the eye contact between Tubbo and Mr. J.

~~Davenport.~~

~~Mr. J.~~

~~JSchlatt.~~

They watched as Dream and Sam ran out of the warehouse seconds later, tackling agents as they reloaded their guns. Punz and Quackity ran in to help them from the top floor. Still, they were far too outnumbered that even with their efficient fighting, the few key players could still walk and make their way toward the plane.

"I have an idea," Tubbo said. "I can take down the plane but it'll take down everything along with it. Everything. The van, phones, comms, everything. We won't be able to communicate."

"Do it," Eret said with no hesitation.

"It's in the van," Tubbo said.

"Well, let's clear a way to the van," Ranboo said, nodding with Tommy.

"George, clear a path for them?" Dream requested.

"Got it," George said.

They were fast and thank god for that. They ran faster than their legs wanted to carry them and finally reached their van. Tubbo climbed into the back and dug through his bag.

"Don't tell your brother," Tubbo told Ranboo with a little crooked smile on his face. Tubbo held a familiar spherical orb in the palm of his hands. "5Up gave me one that he got from Techno." Ranboo and Tommy could only laugh. "Communications are going down in three, two-"

Tubbo pressed the button and dropped the sphere on the ground. He could feel the van that he was crouching in die and hear his comms crackle before he was greeted with silence. It wasn't too noticeable as they were in broad daylight, but the lights in the warehouse all shut off.

Dream watched as Davenport walk towards the plane but struggle to get the door open. Electronic doors and electronics keys, sure he could probably find a way to get into the plane manually, but it seems like he was quick to figure out that even if he found a way to get into the plane, he wouldn't be able to turn the plane on and take off.

George was alone. He knew what it meant when Tubbo decided that the EMF bomb needed to be used, it was truly a last resort, and it meant that George would be isolated from the chaos, hidden in his sniper's nest with no communication with the rest of the team.

He had two options here and a choice to make between them. He could pack up and leave, joining the much riskier, much messier fight on the grounds of the warehouse with the rest of his team (he doesn't love the idea of this, there is a reason he's a sniper, he doesn't do so well with close range combat), or he could stay in his nest, completely alone, keeping watch of Dream and making sure that nobody gets too close. This sounds like a preferable option until he remembers that he can't communicate at all, and he has no one to tell him if any of the bad guys are going to show up behind him and send a bullet straight through his skull. Not Karl, not Ponk, not-

"Gogy," A voice from behind the bushes startled him. George turned around quickly, pulling the pistol he has stashed on his back, and aimed. "Don't shoot! Don't shoot!"

"Tina?" George exclaimed, sighing and putting his gun down though Tina still had her hands up in the air. "What are you doing here?"

"Comms went down and he thought you should have someone watching your back," Tina nudged her head softly.

George turned his attention to the rustling behind the trees. There were a series of hits and groans before an unconscious body flew through the leaves and crashed into the dirt. Moments later, Callahan stepped through, wiping dust off his hands like he's just through a sack of potatoes to the back of a truck. He looked up and met George's eyes, smiling wildly and waving a soft hello.

"Callahan," George sighed.

Callahan wriggled his eyebrows before glancing at his handy work, sighing. Callahan crouched, put his hands on the unconscious body's ankles, and began dragging it away.

"Okay, so we're gonna keep watch and you can keep doing your thing," Tina said, nodding enthusiastically. "Alright goggles?"

"That's a new one, where did you hear that one?" He chuckled.

"Tommy told me a story," Tina said jokingly. "I could stick with Gogy if that's preferred."

"Call me whatever you want, Tina," George shook his head, though his words were light and playful. He nodded and got back to his position, peering through his goggles and scope.

The sudden shutdown of the comms brought a lot of panics not only to George but to many people on the ground. By many people, it's mostly just Sapnap and Quackity.

"Where's Karl?" Sapnap was running so fast that he crashed into Quackity. "Q, where's Karl?"

"*Where's Karl?* I thought you had him, I don't know where he is," Quackity yelled.

"Comms are down, we need to find him," Sapnap said.

"No shit we need to find him," Quackity replied, looking around to try and see if he could spot a tall head of curly hair somewhere, god, anywhere. "Are you sure he's not in the van?"

"Why would he be in the van? The EMF bomb took out everything, he's got nothing to do," Sapnap said.

"He's not a field agent," Quackity said. "Where would he-" Quackity's eyes bulged at the sight of

someone behind Sapnap, seconds away from striking. "Sorry," He pointed his gun straight at Sapnap's chest and sent off three shots.

Sapnap whirled around to see the woman behind him fall to the ground. "That-" Sapnap had a hard time trying to comprehend what just occurred. His hand went down to his chest, touching the fraying and burnt edges of where the bullets had entered though clean and dry from any drop of blood. "That's a little- That was-"

"Move on, Sapnap," Quackity told him. "You need to find Karl."

"Hey, idiots," Puffy exclaimed, catching both of their attention in the midst of the chaos. "If you're looking for Karl, he's out with Ponk, just round the back. Don't just stand there like a bunch of donkeys," And with that, she went in Bad and Skeppy's direction.

"Did she just call us donkeys?" Sapnap asked.

"Sapnap, go!" Quackity exclaimed, shoving Sapnap before going to a jog himself.

Karl was not around the back with Ponk. When Sapnap and Quackity finally got around the back, all they found was a pretty gruesome scene. It was bloody, and it was very much the work of Punz, that much Sapnap could recognize.

"Jesus Christ," Sapnap exclaimed. With a little turn of his head, he spotted Foolish, kneeling on the ground, Punz laying just in front of him with a hand over his abdomen, blood soaking through his clothes. "Holy shit, are you okay?"

"Hey, baby boy," Punz chuckled calmly, wincing as Sam assisted Foolish and cut Punz's clothes so that Foolish can have access. "I'm fine, this is fine."

"It doesn't look fine, what the fuck happened?" Sapnap asked furiously.

"You never told me he was a goddamn circus," Sam replied just as angrily. "It's like trying to tame the Tazmanian Devil."

"So I shot a few people, so I got shot by a few people," Punz shrugged. "Admit it, Sammy, you enjoyed watching it," He said deliriously, his bloodied hand reaching up to Sam's cheeks, patting them twice.

"Is he gonna be okay?" Quackity asked Foolish.

"It doesn't look like it's too bad, nothing major was hit, he's just a little loopy from the blood loss," Foolish said. "What do you two want?"

"Want?" Sapnap asked.

"Why did you come to find me? Do you need bandages, is someone dead?" Foolish continued to talk though his hand didn't stop moving.

"We're not here to find you, we're looking for Karl, but now-" Sapnap gestured to Punz on the ground, potentially dying even though everyone is trying to convince Sapnap that no, Punz isn't dying.

"Oh good," Sam sighed. "Sapnap, Foolish, and I've got Punz, but Ponk is with Karl, please?" He didn't need to fully elaborate on what that sentence actually meant. "They've gone after the kids."

"Okay," Sapnap nodded, his eyes not leaving Punz's bloody abdomen, "Are you su-"

"Baby boy, go!" Punz said. "Foolish knows what he's doing, he won't me die."

"Honestly, I just might," Foolish huffed. "I fucking hate your guts right now, you're such an idiot."

"Sapnap, let's go," Quackity said, pulling Sapnap away.

"Right," Punz said, closing both eyes, and snuggling as comfortably as he can against the concrete floor. "If you make sure I don't die, I'll buy you a drink later," He opened one eye and looked at Sam. "Maybe I'll buy you a drink too."

"Stop flirting, you little maniac," Foolish rolled his eyes. "Besides, he's Ponk's-"

Foolish stopped talking and Sam froze. Punz got up, propping himself on both his elbows and giving the two men a curious look, raising his eyebrows.

"He's Ponk's what?" Punz questioned.

"He's Ponk's soulmate," Foolish confirmed.

"Yeah, but that doesn't matter. Ponk is- You're Ponk's-" Sam mumbled.

"He's Ponk's what?" Punz asked again, though this time about a different person.

Awkward.

"Shut up, Punz," Foolish said, pushing Punz back to the ground.

"If my brother is dating a person with a soulmate who is not his soulmate, I wanna know," Punz exclaimed, as he turned to Sam. "Do you wanna deck him? I can hold him down, I'll pretend I didn't see anything. I'll-" Foolish jabbed the syringe of anesthesia onto Punz's skin. "Fuck you, ow!" He yelled.

"Shut. Up," Foolish pressed.

"No, no, I think he's great," Sam said. "I'm glad Ponk found a good person, I'm not-" Sam stuttered. "I think your brother's a good guy, he's-" Sam tried very hard to avoid Foolish's eye contact. Foolish stayed wide-eyed, his cheeks burning up. "He's smart and he's-"

"Why do *you* look like *you* wanna take my brother out on a date right now?" Punz said.

"Maybe I just leave him to die," Foolish looked at Sam who gave him the gentlest of laughs. "Maybe I just leave him here and we can go find Ponk."

"Yeah?" Sam hummed.

"You guys are fucked up," Punz muttered. "And here I thought the Sapnap, Quackity, Karl triangle was the worst you people have to offer, turns out I was wrong."

Speaking of the triangle, Sapnap and Quackity were surrounded by people by the time they saw Karl in the distance.

"Fuck, when is this gonna be over?" Quackity yelled.

"Language," A voice piped up.

Sapnap and Quackity quickly saw a few bodies fall, making a path for them to escape their little circle of doom. From the other side of the pile of bodies, they saw Bad and Skeppy.

"Looking for Karl, I'm guessing?" Skeppy said. "Quickly, go," He shoved them away, covering their escape.

"You're the best," Sapnap yelled as he left, Quackity next to him.

Skeppy turned to watch, making sure that Sapnap and Quackity didn't need more help and isn't getting surrounded by any more people. He was turning back to Bad when he heard two shots going off followed by two little stings by his ribcage. An agent fell not a few feet away from them.

"You're getting too used to the idea of shooting through me," Skeppy gave Bad an irritated but joking look.

"Dream said it and I know Quackity did it too, it's fun," Bad confessed. "Plus, it's efficient, and as a cherry on top, it shows people that we're together."

"There are other ways to show people that we're together that do not include you shooting me, Bad," Skeppy said.

"Like getting married?" Bad asked.

"Yes, like getting married," Skeppy agreed.

"Okay," Bad smiled. "When we get out of this, we'll get married."

"Wait what?" Skeppy said.

Bad just gave him a quick wink before running off to help Dream and Puffy in their fight.

"Bad, come back here," Skeppy yelled, quickly running after him.

When Sapnap finally got to Karl, he saw Galecki standing a little too close to his comfort. Galecki was standing next to Davenport, who was now in front of Tubbo. Karl did his best to pull Tubbo away.

"Don't-" Tubbo said shaking his head. "Don't, don't, don't-"

"Get away," Karl said. "I am warning you."

"Tubbo, we're leaving," Davenport said, though it doesn't sound like a request at all.

"I can just shoot him," Galecki offered. "It'll be quick."

Before Galecki's finger even moved towards the trigger, Sapnap's hand had already wrapped itself around the barrel, wrestling it out of Galecki's hand. It was a quick fight, Galecki was not a match for both Sapnap's strength or fire. The gun was now in Sapnap's hand, he aimed it at Galecki's head.

"Sapnap-" Karl called.

Quackity did not make it in time to get both Karl and Tubbo out and away, not before Davenport raised his gun at Karl. Davenport didn't hesitate at all, the gunshot rang. Sapnap moved before he even thought. Fire spread through his shoulder, pain creeping all through his chest and neck.

"Oh my god," Karl said.

Sapnap felt Karl's hand press against his shoulder, the pain intensifying. His skin is wet, no doubt due to blood. He could barely turn though he was glad to see that Ranboo and Tommy had successfully gotten Tubbo out of there. Davenport on their heels was not a good thing though at least that meant Sapnap didn't have to deal with him. Galecki was on the ground, Quackity quickly took care of him before going back to Karl and the very injured Sapnap.

"Is he okay?" Quackity immediately put Sapnap's arm around his shoulder to support his weight.

"Of course not, he was an idiot," Karl said furiously.

"I wasn't gonna let my soulmate get shot," Sapnap said.

"Q was gonna be fine, you didn't have to jump in front of m-" Karl sighed, running his hand through his hair.

"No, I meant you," Sapnap said. "Karl, I meant you."

"He's delusional," Karl told Quackity, who could only give him a partly sympathetic, partly guilty, and partly defeated look. "We need to get him to Foolish."

"Alright, let's go," Quackity said.

Ranboo's legs were much longer than Tubbo's that him running in front of Tubbo, whilst his hand is holding Tubbo's wrist, meant that Ranboo nearly pulled Tubbo's arms out of his shoulders. But they were being chased, and Tommy was being loud, so they had to run away, quickly.

"Wilbur!" Tommy said. "Wilbur!"

"I'm kind of busy right now, Tommy," Wilbur replied.

"Mr. J's trying to take Tubbo," Tommy blurted out. "We need to get out of here."

"Yes, I know that we need to get out of here, but we can't get out of here," Wilbur said, pulling the clip off of one of Techno's smoke bombs before tossing it into a group of people that he hoped does not contain one of his own. "We can't get out, there are too many people."

This whole time, Wilbur had not been able to move, unlike the rest of the people from their team. He was standing next to Eret, who had practically everyone who isn't an ally come for her, under explicit instructions to kill her. So for the entire length of however long this battle has been going on, they're simply been in survival mode.

"Where the fuck are all these people coming from?" Eret yelled.

Out of the smoke walked out one sniper, casually unbothered as he could still see through his goggles. Tina and Callahan? Not so much, they were in a coughing mess, but thankfully relatively unharmed.

"We need a plan to get out of here," George declared as if he knew exactly what they'd been talking about.

"Yes, we do!" Ranboo said. "Mr. J's trying to take Tubbo."

"Callahan, Tina, take Tubbo and run," George instructed. Both of them nodded and quickly left the group. "We have bigger problems, they've got more cars driving down the road and a chopper. I saw it from my nest and I need to tell you. We're done. This is done."

"A chopper?" Wilbur questioned, looking up at the sky, turning his head in the direction of the sound of the blades whipping through the air.

"What do the cars look like?" Eret asked George.

"I- What?" George looked confused.

"What do the cars look like?" Eret asked more pointedly. "Were they marked? Were they military-grade? Did they have plates? Were they American? Eastern European?"

"I don't know, I wasn't actually *looking*, Eret," George explained exasperatedly. "I saw them and then I immediately ran down to warn you people because comms are down."

"We can't get out because the EMF bomb took out all the cars in our surrounding area so our only chance really is hijacking one of the vehicles coming right now and leaving in that," Eret said. "We just have to get through however many of them we need to get through to get their cars."

"Oh god, here they are right now," George said.

Heavy cars with tinted bulletproof windows were rolling in at ridiculously high speeds, stopping to a screeching halt not too far away from them. Seconds later the helicopter flew just on top of them, hovering too close to the ground, pushing most people down with the strong wind coming from the blades.

They were trapped, there was no way out.

The chaos was too much that they didn't even process what was happening or what was going to happen. The last thing they heard was a voice yelling *Everybody, get down!* and they couldn't tell if it was coming from their side of the fight or the other. Wilbur just ducked.

Wilbur heard the unsavory sound of a metal canister hitting the ground from all the way high up in the helicopter before a plume of smoke engulfed him. In seconds he was coughing, his eyes burning, his throat closing up in a bitter and acidic mess. He stumbled away, as best he could, but a pair of hands grabbed hold of his shoulders pretty tightly. Wilbur was having a hard time trying to fight it off while also trying to breathe, so he really couldn't do much when the hand holding him pushed a mask against his face.

What?

"Wilbur, stop moving, you're being so difficult right now."

Wilbur knew that voice. Of course, he did. He may not have heard it in so long, but he knew the voice well, too well. He needed to check though, he needed to be sure. He was coughing, rapidly blinking the tears away from his eyes when through the haze and through the mask he saw the shorter stature and blondish hair. He knew the mask was working when he could see again, though he still couldn't believe his eyes.

"Wilbur, where's Tommy?" The man asked.

Wilbur didn't know what to say.

"Dad?"

"Where's Tommy?" Philza clapped both his hands on the side of Wilbur's face, steadying him to focus. "Where's your brother?"

"He was-" Wilbur's brain has yet to catch up to him, but he knew urgency when he heard it, and his brother's safety was top of that list. "He was right there," Pointing vaguely toward the East area. "He and Ranboo might've followed Tubbo. Callahan and Tina were taking Tubbo to safety, JSchlatt wanted to take him," The truth spewed all out of Wilbur in very quick succession.

"Alright, we'll find them," Philza said. "Tubbo's gonna be fine, they're not going to take Tubbo. You've done good, my son, you've done wonderfully."

The dust started to settle as the helicopter took a little altitude. It did not fly away, however, instead having its doors slammed open, ropes were thrown out to the ground, and armed agents down the ropes, landing on the ground. Armed *allies*.

In the center of it all stood the one and only. Of course, of all people in this world, he would be the only one to bring a battle axe to a gunfight and still outmatch everyone else. Moments like these are when you truly understand the difference between a weapons dealer and a true craft master, by the shape, length, weight, and design of the battle axe, not to mention the bits of light and electronics at the grip of it. It was sleek, it was high-tech, and it was lethal.

Technoblade joined the game.

"You've done good," Philza said, patting Wilbur on the shoulder. "Catch your breath, let us take care of the rest."

Philza was about to walk away when he felt Wilbur's hand wrapped around his wrist. Wilbur looked at him, much like a little boy unwilling to be left alone yet again.

"I'm coming with you," Wilbur said adamantly. "Let's go find Tommy."

Phil could only smile and nod.

For as much as Techno is a craftsman who prefers to be kept out of fights, never forget that he was once Herobrine's top agent. Dream never forgot this, and as he watched Techno spin the near 6ft long ax, taking out three people charging at him in an instant before jabbing one with the hidden blade on the base of his ax's handle, Dream could only be grateful.

"Is that Technoblade?" George asked, showing up next to Dream, causing him to jump.

"Jesus Christ-" Dream exclaimed. "What are you doing down here? I thought you were still up in your nest."

"I came down to warn them about the chopper, I didn't know it was Techno and Wil's dad," George told.

"Wil's dad? Philza's here?" Dream whirled around, spotting them almost instantly, making their way to Tommy.

Techno and Phil not only brought themselves and a surprise but along with them, a bunch of people that really helped turn the tide. Some of them Dream recognized, like ex-Herobrine employees such as HBomb and Captain Sparklez, who worked closely with Philza and had quit sometime in the last 6 years. Some only George recognized as people from their underground network, people that Wilbur has worked with like Sneeg and Krytzyy. There were others that came with Technoblade, much like TapL and Illumina, names that Dream knew but never connected to their faces. All of them very good fighters, all of them as good as the last.

They were winning the fight, but the battle was not over just yet.

"That doesn't look good," Dream said as he watched Eret stand face-to-face with Davenport, guns drawn.

"We should go there then," George said. "I think they've got it handled out here," He told Dream as they looked around.

"Alright, let's go," Dream said, his hand instinctively holding George's hand before they walked.

"Wait," George exclaimed, pulling Dream into a quick kiss in the middle of the fire. They were both smiling as they pulled away. "I love you too, by the way."

"What?" Dream tilted his head puzzledly. There was a loud explosion from behind them and that's when it clicked to Dream. "I said that *out loud*?" He yelled.

"Yeah, you did," George laughed. "Everyone on the comms heard it." George got on his tiptoes and placed a kiss on Dream's forehead, the exact spot he had shot through not even an hour ago. "Now let's go."

When they arrived at the stand-off, the situation was undoubtedly tense. Philza was standing off to the side, Eret and Davenport still had their gun pointed at each other's faces. Wilbur was by Tommy's side, trying to usher Tubbo away though his efforts were pointless.

"It's over, Schlatt, it's over," Philza said. "You have no backup coming, your people are down, you're finished, it's finished. We've got local police, army, and a whole lot of allies surrounding all your warehouses, shutting them down, and your planes are not taking off. It's over."

"I don't think it is," Davenport stated boldly.

"Think harder," Eret said. "There's really no reason I don't shoot you dead right now."

"Eret, don't," Philza warned.

"Just so you know, the movement will not die with me," Davenport said. "Even if you kill me right now, somewhere, hidden within your ranks, inside the most powerful offices, the movement still lives. The Syndicate will reign-"

"Okay, I thought he was just a bad person, like a human-trafficking crime person, I didn't think he was the writing-a-manifesto type of crazy," Dream muttered to George who gave him an equally confused look shrugging.

"Tell me why not Phil," Eret said. "They've been playing this game too long, you were collateral in that game, and so was my father, tell me why I shouldn't shoot him right now," He said, cocking his gun. Davenport did the same, both raising their weapons even further.

"You're better than him," Philza said.

"Yeah, well, the bar is very low," Eret said. "I can shoot like half a dozen people right now and still technically be a better person than him."

"If you shoot him, you're going back to Pandora," Philza told her. "If you don't, he goes to Pandora and something can be worked out for you."

Eret swallowed, his eyes still dark, cold, and dead, staring at the barrel of Davenport's gun with not a single emotion. He really wanted to, he really wanted to. But he knew what he had to do.

"Tubbo?" Eret called. "You okay?"

Eret let his eyes glance left, looking at a pretty traumatized Tubbo, peaking over Wilbur's shoulder, unwilling to have Davenport anywhere in his eye-line. Eret could see Tubbo slowly nod.

"Alright," Eret muttered softly. "Okay."

Eret turned the gun with their finger and presented it to Philza grip side first. Philza nodded gratefully though neither of them realized how weird it was for Eret to stand down and leave themselves unarmed while Davenport was still very clearly holding a gun and pointing at them.

"Thank you, Eret," Philza said.

"Don't thank me yet," Eret replied calmly. "He might just have an accident within the walls of Pandora that nobody will be able to prove."

"And you think I'm going to go with you without a fight?" Davenport laughed. "I'm not going anywhere if you think you can put me in some stupid pris-"

It was like a quick flash, no one had even noticed who'd come and joined the circle, but something big swung down and struck Davenport's wrist. The gun and the hand that was holding it fell to the ground, blood spurting everywhere.

"Oh my god, Techno!" Philza yelled.

"What?" Techno looked all but confused.

"What the hell was that? What did you do?" Philza exclaimed loudly.

"He was armed, I thought he needed to be neutralized, I thought that's what we're here to do!" Techno replied defensively.

Davenport was on the ground screaming in pain.

"Oh, I think I'm gonna be sick," Dream gagged.

"Look away, look away," George said, patting Dream's face and turning him around.

"Tubbo, don't look," Ranboo said, wincing as he slowly crept closer to Davenport. "Somebody needs to get Foolish right now."

"Look, it's a clean cut," Techno raised both his hands, though one of them was still holding the very

large, very dangerous, and very bloody ax. "They could just- reattach it at the hospital. Isn't what they do? Just put it on ice."

"You put it on ice! Somebody's gonna need to pick up that hand and it ain't gonna be me," Ranboo said loudly, before pointing at Tubbo. "I said don't look!"

"I'm not looking!" Tubbo lied.

"I am," Tommy chimed, only to have Wilbur immediately cover his eyes with a smack of his palms. "Ow! Wilbur!"

"Fuck, alright," Philza sighed, flagging down a few of the men that he'd brought with him. "TapL, Sneeg, Captain, will you please-"

"Oh god, Jesus, Techno, what did you do?" Sneeg yelled horrifiedly.

"He was armed, now he's not," Techno explained. "Although the correct pun is handed, but whatever."

"You have no idea how glad I am that you're here, Technoblade," Wilbur laughed.

Philza and Techno's reinforcements were much more professional and efficient than Ranboo trying not to pass out and Dream trying not to gag, never mind George who only looked at the bloodied scene with a judgemental look and Eret who couldn't be bothered. The hand was on ice not too long after while Davenport got carried away on the stretcher, still screaming and writhing, into a car.

"It's over," Philza said, looking around at the dying battlefield. "Everyone is in handcuffs and getting shipped off. Interpol and Europol are on their way to help clean up this mess."

"And you?" Tommy piped up. "You gonna go away again before they get here?"

Philza looked over to Tommy, a soft and sad smile on his face as he finally got to see his son without the chaos of the world crashing down around them. He's grown up so fast.

"No, Tommy," Philza told him, noting that this was their first conversation in 6 years. God, Tommy's gonna be an adult soon. "I'm not going anywhere anymore."

Tommy hesitated, looking up to Wilbur who simply nodded before looking back at Philza. With a few short strides, Tommy ran and threw himself into Phil's arms. Phil stumbled back with a soft grunt like the air had been punched out of his lungs, though it quickly turned into joyful laughter.

"I've missed you," Tommy admitted.

"You have no idea," Phil replied, a little choked up as he held onto Tommy's head and held him a little tighter. He looked over Tommy's shoulder at Wil, giving him the most subtle head nudge and inviting him into the group hug, which even when trying to stay cool, Wilbur couldn't say no.

When they pulled apart, Dream could've sworn both Tommy and Wilbur were crying. If he were in a more asshole-ish mood, he would film it and bring it up next time to embarrass them. But he couldn't do that to Philza.

"Eret, dear child, I'm very sorry," Phil said. "I know you have a-"

"Complicated," Eret completed the sentence.

"-complicated relationship with your father. And you've done things that obviously were outside of the law but when it came to it-" Phil placed a hand on the side of Eret's neck, giving him a little smile. "He could only trust you to do the right thing because only you could've been this smart and this thorough, this efficient. He would've been proud."

"Thanks," Eret said shortly.

"Dream," Philza called.

"Hi," Dream squeaked much like a small child getting caught would. "Look, Phil, I didn't-"

"It's very good to see you," Phil said, pulling Dream into a quick hug. Surprising but not unwelcomed.

"I'm sorry," Dream apologized.

"You didn't do anything you weren't supposed to," Phil said. "You didn't have anything to do with what happened to me, and I'm just glad you helped," He grinned. "Plus, I saw security camera footage that Techno stole for me of you beating Galecki into a puddle and it made me giggle."

"I'm-" Dream couldn't help but chuckle. "I'm glad you enjoyed it."

"And this would be 404?" Philza said. "I heard about you from Techno, you guys are-"

"Yeah," George nodded. "Nice to meet you Philza."

"Likewise," Philza replied.

"So what happens now?" Dream asked.

"Uh, well-" Philza huffed. "Eret's father left Herorbine, or whatever's left of its ruins to Eret, he wrote it in his will, you know, that file you stole from the four main towers? Along with a few other things he wanted to say to you."

"I haven't been able to open it," Eret said.

"That's because you need the encrypted key," Phil dug through his pocket and pulled out the smallest flash drive at the end of a silver chain. "Your father left it with me, along with the Herobrine chairman of the board seat, and acting director. He wanted to leave that to you, but I don't think you legally can take it when you're still blacklisted and an internationally wanted criminal."

"Right," Eret said, taking the flash drive and clutching it tightly in their hand.

"Speaking of that," George said. "What happens to us? We're criminals. We have to leave, like right now."

"Not necessarily," Phil told him. "You know how sometimes the CIA lets people go into witsec even though they did something bad, but they did something else that helps the CIA get worse people? Some deals could be made for you. Reduced sentences, community service-"

"Why are you looking at me?" Wilbur scoffed. "Am I gonna have to do community service?"

"Yes, if you don't want to go to jail, Wilbur," Philza explained. "You too Tommy."

"What's the point of my dad being the Director of Herobrine if I'm going to jail?" Tommy chimed in incredulously.

"Eret was in Pandora for two years," Philza said pointedly.

"That was because his father was dead and very much not the Director of Herobrine," Wilbur retaliated. "Plus, that was part of the plan."

"Okay, and this is part of the plan to make sure you don't live the rest of your life as an internationally wanted criminal that ends up living under a bridge," Philza told him. "Also you're grounded."

"I'm not gonna live under a bridge-" Wilbur gasped passionately. "And what do you mean *I'm grounded*?"

"That's it? Reduced sentence, community service?" George interrupted.

"There's a third option," Phil declared. "A working commitment."

"A working commitment?" George asked.

"Yeah," Phil nodded. "Right now, ballparking everything you've ever done, both good and bad,

including your very long career hit list but also stopping an international scale terrorism, you're looking at twelve to eighteen years?"

"Of jail time?" Dream yelled. "Eighteen years? He helped stopped international terrorism!"

"He has killed a lot of people in his past," Phil said. "And I mean a lot."

"That's true," George grimaced.

"Shut up, George," Dream scolded him.

"But-" Phil interjected. "One can argue that you are a very good sniper, a very talented sniper. And you would be useful for hostage situations, and secret missions. So, we could probably replace that prison sentence with a working commitment of the same length with Herobrine, where your talents would be put to use at our disposal and any law enforcement and intelligence agencies around the world that request it."

"Twelve to eighteen years?" George was in disbelief. "Oh god."

"You do what you do still, just under our belt, our rules," Philza explained. "And good behavior of course. Doesn't pay as good money, but you don't have to run anymore."

"If you run, I run," Dream whispered to George.

"What?" George said.

"If you don't want to do this- If you want to run, I run with you," Dream said. "We'll run away, together."

"We both know you won't do that," George shook his head with a sad smile.

"For you, I would."

George fell silent at the adamant certainty that came from Dream's voice and Dream's words. It was simple, it was true, and it was honest. There wasn't a doubt in George's mind that if he asked Dream to leave, right now, and run away like Bonnie and Clyde for the rest of their lives, Dream would do it in a heartbeat. That feeling alone was enough to make George cry, looking into the pair of green eyes that looked at him with unconditional love, George knew he couldn't.

"And for you, fuck-" George laughed at himself in disbelief. "I guess for you, I'd fucking work for multiple governments, should they need me."

"Really?" Dream's smile was brighter than the sun.

"Twelve to eighteen years," George shook his head. "You know that means you're going to have to work with me for twelve to eighteen years, right?"

"I'd work with you every single day until retirement if I could," Dream told him.

"You're so cheesy, I hate it," George said before pressing a soft kiss on Dream's lips. He turned to Philza, who was standing there waiting for them patiently, trying his best to ignore his two sons arguing behind him. "Make whatever deals you can, I'll do whatever you want."

"Sounds good," Philza said before turning back to the absolute screaming match behind him.

"Why doesn't Techno get community service? That's not fair!" Tommy yelled.

"I have other things to do, you little twerp," Techno answered.

"He chopped off Schlatt's hand, fully decapitated it," Tommy did very dramatic gestures.

"Tubbo, you alright?" Phil asked, ignoring the noise.

"I really wish everyone would stop asking me that," Tubbo chuckled sadly. "I'm fine, Phil. Really. Watching Techno with the ax was pretty sick, in both senses of the word, but I'll be fine. I'm glad

you're back and you're not going to throw us in jail."

"Well no, you'd technically go to juvie," Phil corrected.

"Phil," Tubbo moaned as Phil broke into a grin.

Dream admits that he was a little embarrassed to be going into the warehouse holding George's hand. Not particularly embarrassed over the fact that he was holding hands with George, more that he'd been too focused on George and Phil rather than knowing what the status of his teammates was. He was thankful to see his team alive, if not a bit messed up and injured, resting inside the warehouse, mostly because that's where Foolish had stationed himself.

Bad and Skeppy were sitting on the floor, leaning against the wall, Skeppy's head resting on Bad's shoulders, both panting and still catching their breaths. Puffy had made herself comfortable sleeping on the floor, Sam lying on the concrete right next to her. Quackity and Punz were next to each other, not too far away from where Sapnap was lying, his head resting gently on Karl's lap, Foolish doing his finishing stitches on Sapnap's wounds. Tina, Ponk, and Callahan were also on the ground looking much better than everyone else, having a quiet and civil conversation, Tina translating between them.

"What the hell happened to you people?" Dream asked. "Sapnap, what?"

"He jumped in front of a gun for me," Karl said. "He was being an idiot."

Sapnap only smiled weakly and gave Dream a peace sign with his fingers.

"What happened outside?" Tina questioned.

"Techno chopped off Schlatt's hand," George told them.

"What?" Punz yelled.

"Who's Schlatt again?" Puffy asked.

"Oh uh-" George looked at Dream. "What do you call him? Davenport?"

"Him and Tubbo, what up with that?" Ponk question.

"No clue," Dream shook his head. "We'll debrief at some point but it's not a today problem. We need rest and a lot of sleep."

"All done," Foolish declared. "You're all done, Sapnap."

"Thanks, Foolish," Sapnap said.

"Is that the last of you people that need immediate attention? Can everyone else wait until we get to the hospital?" Foolish questioned. He was replied with a few mumblings of agreement and exhausted nods.

They were just settling down when Phil came walking into the warehouse.

"Which one of you is Karl?" Philza asked.

"That would be me," Karl raised his hands timidly. "Mr. Director, sir?" He added hesitantly.

"Oh please don't call me that," Phil chuckled kindly. "I got the memo you sent, one of our planes is going to Rayleigh right now if you'd like to catch a ride," He vaguely pointed over his shoulder.

"Rayleigh?" Sapnap questioned.

"Uh, I-" Karl looked a little stuck. Only because he was actually a little stuck seeing as how Spanap still had his head on Karl's lap, and Karl can't stand up and run away like his face says he would like to. "Could you give me a minute?"

"Sure, they leave in 10," Phil said before leaving again.

"Is that the new Director?" Tina asked.

"Wilbur's father," Dream nodded.

"Oh, weird," Ponk exclaimed. "I thought he was dead."

"Rayleigh?" Sapnap said again, pulling himself off of Karl's lap to sit and turn to look more properly at Karl. "What does he mean Rayleigh? What memo?"

"I'm going back to Rayleigh," Karl told him.

"We're not stationed at Rayleigh," Sapnap said slowly.

"*You're* not stationed in Rayleigh," Karl emphasized. "The Archives are though."

Silence. All the background chattering between friends, teammates, and allies died down instantly and all Karl could do was cough awkwardly, looking at the floor.

"Okay, I think we need to go," Dream clapped his hands.

"Oh, c'mon Dream," Puffy groaned. "I'm so comfortable on the floor."

"And it's not like we're not gonna know what they're gonna be talking about," Sam said. "Why do you guys care about privacy all of a sudden? Fuck, my love life's been a communal gossip topic for the last two years."

"And who's fault is that?" Ponk replied.

"Can't *they* move? They're only two people, there's so many of us here," Skeppy bargained.

"Come on, Geppy," Bad chuckled softly, standing up and pulling his soulmate up with him.
"Sapnap just got shot, I don't think he should be walking anytime soon."

"I also just got shot, does that mean I can stay?" Punz raised his hand.

"Alright, everybody move," George said.

"Sam, go get Punz," Dream said.

As Dream and George herded everyone out of the warehouse, Sapnap looked at them and mouthed a little thank you. One by one everyone walked away, except for one Quackity, moving from his seat next to a now-gone Punz, and sitting closer to Karl and Sapnap.

"I-" Quackity started. "I should stay for this, right?"

Karl didn't answer, only giving him a weak smile.

"Why are you going back to the Archives?" Sapnap asked.

"Well, somebody needs to help undo all the crap we pulled, and Tina isn't gonna be able to do it alone, so I'm going back," Karl said. "You know, it's been fun but-"

"You're leaving," Sapnap said.

"Sapnap-" Karl sighed.

"You're leaving *me*," Sapnap said pointedly. "I know you're angry at us for keeping it a secret, Karl, but that's a fight that we can work on. I'm really, really, sorry about that. I didn't want you to get hurt, and I know you get hurt. And I'm gonna spend the rest of my life apologizing for that. But you don't leave because of things like that-"

"Sapnap," Karl tried to interrupt but Sapnap's ramble was too quick.

"You- you put me on the couch and you take the car and leave me in the middle of the road while it's raining, you do couple fighting shit and make me buy you flowers for a year-" Sarnap continued.

"Wilder, I'm not mad at you," Karl said. Sarnap froze at the use of his real name. Karl turned and looked at Quackity. "I'm not mad at you either, Q."

"Then why are you leaving?" Quackity asked.

"Because I-" Karl sighed. "Because I fell in love with someone who found their soulmate. And I don't think I'm strong enough to be here for that."

"What happened to not caring about soulmates? You know, staying together soulmate or not?" Sarnap questioned.

"That was before you-" Karl looked strained. "-*found* your soulmate." Karl shook his head sadly. "Q's right here, and he's great. And you guys are friends and teammates, and you love each other even if you don't show it romantically. He's your soulmate, Quackity, tell him."

"Tell him what? That you're the best thing that's ever happened to him? That I've never seen him happier with anyone in my years of knowing him until he met you?" Quackity stated. "I don't know what you want from me, Karlos, I'm on his side. I don't want you to go either."

"You're making this hard," Karl huffed, looking up towards the ceiling to stop himself from crying. "Look, I'm happy for you two- It's- Your team is lucky. You guys are each other's soulmates. It's you two, and Bad and Skeppy, and Dream and George-"

"*My* team? What happened to *our* team?" Quackity said.

"I'm not part of your team," Karl said adamantly.

"Like hell, you aren't," Quackity contested.

"Karl?" Philza called, standing at the door. "The truck is leaving in-"

From the side of Sapnap's eyes, he saw the new acting Director get tackled by a very tall Dream and pulled away from the door.

"Look, I have to go." Karl still knew it was time though.

"You're going to have to shoot me," Sapnap said.

"What? You're ridiculous, Sapnap-" Karl shook his head.

"I took a bullet for *you*, okay? *For you*. I took a bullet for my *soulmate*," Sapnap said firmly.

"I'm not your soulmate," Karl replied.

"Well, I believe it," Sapnap told him. "If you don't then- I took a bullet, and the least you can do is repay the favor and shoot me."

"What?" Karl exclaimed.

"I saved your life, you should do whatever I say, those are the rules," Sapnap said.

"You're an idiot," Karl told him, getting up from his sitting position on the floor. He was quickly pulled back down with a smack on the concrete. "What are you doing?"

"If you don't shoot me, I'm gonna shoot you," Sapnap said.

"You're what?" Karl yelled out. "Quackity, he's insane."

"Yeah, I knew that but I'm just kinda interested to see where this goes," Quackity told him.

"You're crazy, you're insane," Karl rattled, trying to stand up again but Quackity was holding him down this time. "Sapnap, I don't want to hurt you, I just-"

"I didn't wanna do this but you left me no choice," Sapnap said.

"What don't you wanna do? What are you doing?" Karl squirmed under Quackity's hands.

Sapnap moved fast, taking something out of his pocket and jabbing it into Karl's thigh.

"Ow!" Karl exclaimed, as Sapnap's fist hit his thigh. "Did you just stab me with a knife?" He asked furiously.

"It was a scalpel! I stole it from Foolish's medical bag," Sapnap answered defensively.

"And you thought you could just stab me with it?" Karl yelled even louder.

"Does it hurt?" Sapnap questioned.

"Yes, it hurts you fucking asshole, you stabbed me-" Karl said.

"It's not bleeding," Quackity interrupted, stopping Karl in his tracks.

Karl looked down, a metal scalpel sticking out of his thigh.

"You're not bleeding," Quackity's laughed in disbelief.

"Does it hurt?" Sapnap repeated the exact same question.

"Is- is it-" Karl stuttered, his eyes glued to the scalpel still in his thigh. "Is it just adrenaline?"

Sapnap looked at Karl with a smile, his hand wrapped around the scalpel before pulling it out of Karl's thigh.

"Ow," Karl said, out of habit more than anything. All three of them inspected his skin under the cut in his jeans. Spotless.

"Well, would you look at that?" Sapnap said smugly.

Sapnap was met with a loud whack across his face. Karl had slapped him, though it didn't end there. It was a series of punches on his chest, pushing him backward.

"You're an idiot, you're an asshole, I fucking hate you," Karl said, breaking free from Quackity's grip and continuously assaulting Sapnap. Sapnap only let it happen. He even chuckled. "You can keep hitting me, Karl, it doesn't hurt," Sapnap laughed triumphantly. "*It doesn't hurt.*"

Karl went on for a little bit before sitting back down, his chest rising and falling, panting as he's trying to catch his breath. He looked at Quackity, equally mad and furious that the man only looked at him with a goofy grin.

"Do we wanna test that theory out? Do you wanna shoot me too?" Quackity shrugged. "I could stab you, but you didn't take it so well the first time, so you can stab me if you want."

Quackity held out his palm in front of Karl before handing him the scalpel from Sapnap's hand. Karl looked at Quackity's palms with furrowed eyebrows, looking almost disgusted and scared at the thought. The scalpel hovered over Quackity's palms, too long as Karl didn't have the guts to bring it down. Quackity, however, had just enough guts to push his hand into the scalpel himself. Karl was so shocked he jumped back and dropped the scalpel.

"H-how-" Karl stuttered.

"Honestly, that one was a shot in the dark," Quackity admits. "I didn't know if that one was gonna work."

"How did you know?" Karl asked.

"You bit me," Sapnap said, trying his best to catch his breath. "That one night at the hotel, we were kissing and you accidentally bit me."

"I- You said I didn't," Karl opposed.

"Maybe you did, maybe you didn't," Sapnap shrugged. "I didn't know what to think after finding out that Q was my soulmate, and I didn't know if I could remember that night properly. But I just knew."

"And you were willing to risk stabbing me, just because *you knew*?" Karl said incredulously.

"Well, I was willing to risk you shooting me, but you didn't wanna do that," Sapnap corrected him.

"You guys are assholes," Karl shook his head.

"And we are going to spend the rest of our lives making it up to you," Quackity vowed.

They fell quiet. Somewhere in the middle of the fight and struggle, all the emotions bursting, Karl had tears coming out of his eyes. Sapnap reached up and wiped it gently, Karl finally leaning into his touch and letting out a shaky laugh.

"I get two?" Karl asked weakly. His's voice was small and in disbelief. "I get to have you both?"

"Not if you're going back to Rayleigh, I'm not moving to North Carolina," Quackity stated.

"You get to have us both," Sapnap said, pulling Karl into a kiss.

It tasted like metal and salt, the remains of tears and blood from the battle all culminating into one kiss. Sapnap inhaled, absorbing the most of Karl that he could after being away from Karl's touch for what felt like years while in reality was about a day and a half since his secret was exposed and Karl got mad at him. Did Sapnap actually know? No. But he would rather die than not figure it out and lose Karl, that much he knew. They were laughing softly when they pulled apart, Karl's hand

holding Quackity's as Quackity placed a soft kiss on the top of Karl's hair. A shared knowing look between Sapnap and Quackity told them they can finally breathe again.

"Can we come back in now?" Dream yelled from outside. Dream didn't wait for an answer before walking back into the warehouse, everyone following.

"Everyone heard everything?" Sapnap rolled his eyes. "Couldn't stand a few feet further from the door?"

"You guys were shouting, I could've been in France and still heard you," George told them.

"You know you're gonna have to report to that database that logs people who have more than one proven soulmate right?" Sam informed.

"That exists?" Puffy asked, laying back down on the floor, her arms all stretched out.

"Yeah, they log all the cases for three, four soulmates. They're still trying to figure this out," Sam said.

"Why do you know this?" Ponk questioned.

"No reason," Sam shrugged.

"So are you two back together?" Bad suddenly interrupted.

"Bad! You can't just ask them that," Skeppy exclaimed in horror.

"We just listened to those three deal with their whole business, and I can't ask my friend if they're back together?" Bad asked.

"Are you?" Tommy agreed with Bad's sentiment and reiterated the question. "You'd tell me, right Sam?"

"Uh-" Sam pursed his lips, unsure of what to answer.

"He's trying to go out with my boyfriend," Ponk said. "He asked Foolish out to dinner. So I have no idea what he wants."

"You said it was okay!" Sam yelled defensively.

"I'm your boyfriend?" Foolish muttered confusedly.

"I am so lost," Ranboo commented.

"It is! I'm just answering Bad and Tommy's question," Ponk replied.

"Speaking of Bad," Tina piped up. "Can we talk about how Bad and Skeppy got engaged?"

"They *what*?" Sapnap shouted.

"Because Callahan told me and I haven't been able to tell anyone-" Tina continued.

"When did you even-" Quackity was in immediate interrogation mode.

"How do you even know that?" Bad looked at Callahan in amazement.

"He's very observant," Tina said a bit after Callahan signed.

"Wait, okay, Bad didn't even propose, he just kind of-" Skeppy interjected.

As the group erupted into loud and incoherent yells filled with both accusatory but loving arguments, Eret sat back and watched. It looks like they're fighting, it does. Tommy's outrageous

hand movements, Wilbur trying to get him to sit down. Tubbo is loud and asks more questions than Quackity. Punz threw the conversation back to a blushing Foolish still unsure about how to process things. Dream and Karl both talked to each other, while George found himself in a much more civil conversation with Technoblade. Puffy and Callahan are in conversation, and Tina goes off to talk with Ponk and Sam. Ranboo and Phil were off to the side, laughing at some antics happening in the group.

It looks like they're fighting, but they really aren't.

Eret sat there, twirling the silver flash drive at the end of the chain between his fingers. He'll get to that later.

God, he can finally breathe.

Chapter End Notes

i know a lot of people wanted a plane fighter jet chase scene that they didn't end up getting (sorry I had no space)

and I hope this chapter doesn't feel too rushed even though it is bcs I'm tying up a lot of plot arcs that had no time to develop, (I don't love it either) but I still hope you guys can enjoy the chapter

one last chapter left, it's the epilogue, but it's still gonna be fun

thanks for reading, I appreciate the comments and kudos, see yo on new years !!

Chapter 15

Chapter Notes

sorry for a shorter chapter (this is 7k ish) but this is it !! the last chapter !!

really short and quick i'd like to thank everyone that read, commented, kudos, interacted with this fic, made fanarts, talked about it, and just anyone who had given this fic their support, it really means a lot to me and I appreciate all of it. obviously the long (multiple) hiatus wasn't ideal but we got there eventually !! and now the journey is over

I'll say more things at the end notes, so for now, happy reading !!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

One week later

"Bermuda?" Tubbo asked. "That's where Phil's been for the past six years? Like the triangle?"

"Yes, like the triangle," Tommy said. "Apparently he's just been in hiding and playing with coconuts for six years, fuck, I don't know."

"I haven't been playing with coconuts for six years Tommy," Phil sounded exasperated. "I've been trying to make sure the world doesn't fall apart. I was working with Eret's father up to the point when he was murdered."

"He left me alone to go play with coconuts," Tommy continued to talk, ignoring Phil in his entirety.

Phil rolled his eyes though a small smile on his face remains. Tommy was joking, obviously. His son knew that he was being hunted, that for the last six years, he had an active hit on him. Tommy understood, even after being left at such a young age, that Phil had to leave if not for his own life, but for Tommy's and Wilbur's. Still, Phil knew he could've done things a little differently, so if playfully teasing and poking fun at him was one of the ways Tommy could learn to have him back in his life, sure, Phil can live with that.

"Ooh, ooh, Phil, could we get bunk beds?" Tubbo asked.

"You have two separate rooms, why would you need bunkbeds?" Phil asked.

"Bunkbeds are cool," Tubbo said.

Phil shook his head, ignoring the two boys' talk as they walked through the doors of the Miami HQ.

On any regular day, Tommy and Tubbo would not dream of walking into Herobrine's Miami HQ, not in broad daylight, not without the intent of stealing anything, and definitely not in broad daylight. You can say that things have changed, slightly.

The place was running a bit on bare bones as a lot of the staff went through the big purge from the implosion caused by Davenport, but there were enough agents and staff left to keep the place running. Phil was looking very normal, very inconspicuous, but from the way people gave him awkward salutes and bows, unsure of what to do altogether, he gathered that perhaps people have gotten the memo about the leadership changes.

He walked into the elevator, Tubbo and Tommy still chatting with each other, before making their way to their basement training ground. When the elevator opened, he was greeted by a much busier atmosphere.

"Oh no, Phil!" Techno yelled immediately. "Why'd you bring the two rascals here?"

Technoblade was sitting on top of a high chair, an entire corner of the large and empty basement was dominated by him, his tables, and his weapons alone. He looked up, taking off the glasses with the magnifying loupe off his head, and looked disappointedly at Phil. The look turned from disappointed to critical as Phil walked closer to his workbench, the two boys following behind.

"I can't leave them at home Techno," Phil replied.

"Just leave them in the car, put the AC on, and give 'em some water," Techno muttered.

"Techno, they're not dogs," Phil laughed. "They won't touch your equipment, I promise."

"Tubbo already pocketed my laser knife," Techno said, putting his hand out. "Give it back."

"It's a laser knife? I thought it was just a knife?" Tubbo gasped excitedly.

"Give it back, Tubbo," Phil said, wrestling the knife out of Tubbo's hand before giving it back to Techno.

"Should've left them with the tall one, where's Wilbur?" Techno asked, putting his glasses back on and going back to his soldering job.

"Community service," Tommy said. "He's picking up trash on the side of the highway."

"Is he actually?" Techno asked.

"No, but I wish he was," Tommy told him.

"He's- somewhere," Phil waved lazily. "He's out on a job with Skeppy, Jack, and Fundy. You know, Jack and Fundy just got back from Czech and brought a lot of intel with him."

"Why is Skeppy working tod-"

"Phil!" A voice called from the other side of the room. Phil turned to see Dream waving at him. "What are you doing here?"

"I work here, in case you forgot," Phil said teasingly, walking away from the unfinished conversation with Techno. "What? You got the big new office and now you're so eager to kick me out?"

"To be honest, the office view could be better," Dream replied sarcastically. "We were just training," He nudged his head towards the boxing ring that they have, and Sam currently putting Quackity in a toe hold.

"I see," Phil hummed, watching as Tommy and Tubbo run to get a closer look at the fight. "Very violent."

"I've signed the new contract, by the way, and George too, we've signed it," Dream said.

"I did receive that. I know you like traveling and getting sent places, being in the field and everything, but I do hope you like the more permanent office and supervisor position," Phil said.

"I think I'll be fine," Dream said while all the people behind him were screaming over something that happened. "Have you heard from Wilbur yet?"

"I thought he'd be back by now, actually," Phil said. "That's why I came here, but I guess not."

"And uh-" Dream hesitated.

"Eret?" Phil guessed.

"Any word?" Dream asked.

"No, I have no idea where she disappeared off to," Phil shrugged. "She's still technically a wanted criminal, and she's definitely on the no-fly list, but she has her ways."

"Are we gonna try and find them?" Dream looked serious, crossing his arm in front of him. "They murdered Cardoso in Italy when she was already getting transported to holding."

"Yeah and he was actually in Pandora paying a visit to Davenport three days ago," Phil said. "Nobody could stop him though, frankly, the guards didn't know but-"

"If you're Eret, three days means you could be anywhere in the world right now," Dream huffed. "We should be looking for them?"

"I think they'll be fine," Phil said. "They'll come back home, eventually. If not- I mean if they're out there doing crime, and breaking into palaces and museums again, we'll know, and it's a problem

for when that day comes, but until then, we'll leave them alone."

"Got it," Dream nodded.

"Phil," Tommy yelled.

"Yes, Tommy?" Phil replied.

"Could I please ride Punz's motorcycle?" Tommy pleaded.

"Absolutely not Tommy," Phil said without a second thought.

"Told you," Punz said. "Sorry buddy, maybe another time."

"But why not Phil?" Tommy whined.

"You don't know how to ride a motorcycle Tommy, you're going to get yourself killed," Phil replied. "You don't even know how to ride a bike."

"But Punz is going to teach me," Tommy said.

"Hang on a minute, you never told me you didn't know how to ride a bike," Punz interrupted.

"I see everyone's settling in well?" Phil asked Dream again.

"I think so," Dream said. "There are more than a few people who aren't used to being on this side of the law, but I think they'll be alright."

Just after the words left Dream's mouth there was a loud bang and a plume of smoke from the little office door facing the North side of the building. The door swung open and out goes a coughing Ranboo and Aimsey.

"What are you two doing?" Phil called.

"Sam gave us TNT," Ranboo answered though the answer didn't do much answering of any questions.

"Hey Phil," George said as he walked toward Dream and Phil before settling comfortably next to Dream. George was holding a particularly scary-looking gun, complete with a little screen with the classic green display on the black background and a moving crosshair. "You're coming later, right?"

"What time is that again? 4 PM?" Phil checked his watch. "Yeah, I should be there."

"That's great!" George cheered.

"What are you holding?" Dream couldn't keep quiet anymore. "What is that gun? It looks ridiculous and definitely not regulation."

"It's not," George replied calmly. "It's a new design Techno wanted me to try out."

"You can't bring that into the field," Dream told him.

"Hm, I think I can," George hummed.

"No, you can't we have rules," Dream stated more firmly.

"Yeah? And what are you gonna do about it?" George said, straightening Dream's tie before pressing a quick kiss on his lips. Dream was very quickly left speechless and looking pretty dumb.

"W-we have rules," Dream stuttered. "Phil, tell him we have rules."

"I'm not getting in the middle of this," Phil raised both his hands. "You're his boss, you tell him the

rules."

"Yeah, but you're *my* boss, so-" Dream started but Phil kept his hand up in the air and walked backward until he was no longer in the conversation. "George, you can't."

"And why not?" George asked innocently. "I thought you loved me."

"You can't keep getting away with this," Dream sighed.

"Then what's the point of being soulmates with the guy making the rules?" George smirked mischievously before planting another kiss on Dream's lips.

"You're such an idiot," Dream shook his head.

"Love you too," George winked before walking away with his really, really, should-not-be-in-the-street gun.

Breathe in, breathe out, Dream. Surely both Techno and George know what they're doing.

"Why are you all here, by the way?" Phil asked loudly, getting the attention of everyone in the room. "I thought you'd all take the day off."

"Well, Skeppy left, so it didn't seem right for the rest of us to take the day off," Sapnap replied.

"Skeppy shouldn't be working today. Bad, why did you let him leave?" Phil questioned jokingly.

"Well, one of us had to leave the house and he volunteered," Bad said. "I was shocked too."

"Isn't it cutting a little close? I really did think Wilbur ought to be back by now," Phil hummed, and just on cue, his phone rang.

"Oh, is that him?" Ranboo said, striding towards Phil to get a glimpse of the person on the caller ID.

"It's Jack," Phil muttered, pressing the green call button and putting the phone to his ear. "Hello?"

"Phil! Oh thank god," Jack exclaimed. "We're in a bit of a pickle."

"What happened?" Phil's voice was immediately laced with concern.

"Promise you won't get mad," Jack said.

"What did you do?" Phil said a little harder.

"Well it's a really long story, do you want the story, the excuse, or just the apology?" Jack said.

"I-" Phil stuttered, looking wildly at the dozen of concerned faces staring back at him. "Jack, just tell me."

"Long story short, we're a little surrounded," Jack explained.

"A little surrounded?" Phil questioned. "What's *a little surrounded*?"

Before the question had even finished leaving Phil's mouth, the entire garage had already fallen into movement. Dream took off his blazer and tie, taking off his business management look and swapping it for his field look, while George immediately packed the gun that Dream strictly told him he wasn't allowed to bring. Sam and Sapnap quickly jumped out of the boxing ring, taking the wrap bandages off their hands, Punz and Quackity ran to go collect the kevlar vests from the storage room, Bad lacing up his shoes. Tommy and Tubbo raided the weapons shelves, while Aimsey and Ranboo started the cars. Last but not least, Karl and Ponk ran to their computer stations, immediately activating and putting the GPS tracker on the big screen. Phil put his phone on the table while Ponk immediately connected it to the speakers around the room.

The only person that didn't move was Technoblade. He didn't move a single inch. He didn't even look up, it was impressive.

"You know how you said that *Miami was the first HQ they took over and so the warehouse rented under Galecki's name that's a little bit outside of Miami must hold a lot of sketchy shit*, and you told us that *it was a recon mission and only a recon mission*, and also you told us *not to touch anything and pick a fight?*" Jack chuckled nervously.

"How many people are there?" Phil spoke.

"A lot Phil, it's a lot of people Phil," A new voice, Fundy's voice to be exact, yelled into the phone. "We fucked up, we fucked up."

"Alright, we got your locations, we're sending them back up right now," Phil told them, though he was looking at the room curiously. "Are you all going?"

"Yes," Bad replied.

"No? Bad, you can't go," Sapnap said.

"Before you give me the whole speech on how I can't go, save it, Sapnap," Bad interrupted.

"No, Bad, please, I'll go," Phill offered. "You shouldn't be working today."

"Yeah, exactly like Skeppy shouldn't have worked today, we lost Skeppy, we can't lose you too," Karl said. "This is a disaster."

"I said save it," Bad told them adamantly. "Skeppy needs me, so I'm going. End of."

"Well, Dream can't go, you have to pick up the uh- the thing at 3:30 PM," George snapped his fingers, his words leaving him in the middle of a rush.

"If this is your sneaky little way of getting me not to go on a mission with you so you can play with your new shiny gun, it's not gonna work," Dream said. "Techno?" He yelled. "Can you pick up the thing at 3:30? Bring Karl with you."

"Kay," Techno said, not looking up from his work still.

"Uh-" Sam suddenly stopped before he jumped into the car. "Ponk, I might not be able to make it in time so-"

"I'll pick Foolish up from the Hospital, got it," Ponk finished Sam's thought.

"You're the best," Sam sighed, giving Ponk a wink which was replied with a very fond eye roll.

"Hey!" Karl called. "Kisses before you go!"

Sapnap and Quackity both ran to Karl's station. Quackity gave Karl a quick kiss on the cheek while Sapnap planted a long kiss on the lips.

"At least one of you cannot get hurt on this mission, if either of you gets shot I will be very angry," Karl stated.

"See you later," Sapnap said.

"We should take the chopper," Dream declared. "Can we take the chopper?" He looked at Phil.

"Your house, your rules," Phil shrugged. "But I did already text Callahan and he's at the roof."

"Amazing, let's go," Dream said, nudging his head as George and Bad followed him to the elevator.

"Ranboo, don't drive too fast," Techno warned, still not looking up from his desk.

"How did he even know I was gonna drive?" Ranboo whispered to Tommy and Tubbo, both of whom looked equally impressed and disturbed.

Punz was the first to roll out on his motorcycle. That's the benefit of having your own vehicle that rides a singular person. Sapnap's car drove out just behind him, bringing with him Quackity and Sam. Ranboo is behind them, bringing Tommy, Tubbo, and Aimsey. It took a bit to get the helicopter off the pad, but flying was always faster than within a few minutes, Dream could see the figure of Punz's motorcycle absolutely zooming down the street, clearing the way for the 2 SUVs that followed him.

"Here," George said, putting on Dream's earpiece for him as Dream was too busy co-piloting for Callahan. "You forgot comms."

"What time is it, George?" Dream asked.

"Oh, Dream, would you forget about the time already?" Bad sighed.

"No, I don't want to be late," Dream said.

"Could we really *be* late if Skeppy and me aren't there?" Bad shook his head.

"Yes, the schedule says four, so we should be there at four," Dream said adamantly.

"It's like 3:18," George said. "We're definitely gonna be late."

"Damn it," Dream cursed.

"Dream, it's fine," Bad chuckled.

"Yeah, you're right, it's fine," Dream said. "We won't even deal with these clowns, we'll just get Skeppy out and leave immediately after."

"You mean to get all of them out, right?" George laughed.

"Sure," Dream shrugged.

It was a small warehouse outside of Miami, exactly like what Jack had told them. It was in the middle of nowhere, but by the number of mismatched cars and bike parks haphazardly just by the gate entrance of the property, it was fairly obvious that they were not alone. Dream counted maybe 20-30 people, at most 40 people, which is a lot of people, and definitely outnumbered the measly group of 4 that got sent there. But by the way, a lot of them scrambled away at the first sign of the helicopter, Dream knew they weren't the highly trained henchmen like the ones they fought in Germany.

"I'm going after them," Ranboo said. "Tell local police to cut them off by the highway 75 and 595 intersection."

"Already on it," Karl replied through the comms.

Dream saw Ranboo's car speed off after he momentarily stop to drop off Tommy and Tubbo in the middle of the fight. Ranboo raced after the few bikers and cars that left the warehouse premises. Punz jumped into action too quickly, barely even turning off his motorcycle. Sapnap, Sam, and Quackity weren't too far behind.

The four members of their extended team were stranded on the roof of the warehouse. Nobody was sure how they managed to do that, it feels and looks a little more like The Walking Dead, but if that's what it took for them to survive, that I guess it was a good escape plan.

Dream swapped seats with Callahan. He'd realized his mistake early on, knowing full well he would be completely useless on the helicopter unless they landed, which doesn't seem be possible at the moment. But at least Callahan was used to, and would gladly, hang off the side of the helicopter and start shooting down. George was equally as comfortable, making really good shots so long as Dream kept the bird steady. Bad unrolled the rope ladder to the top of the roof.

Only Skeppy climbed it though.

Fundy and Jack actually looked pretty excited to join in on the fight once Tommy and Tubbo had thrown them extra artillery and short-ranged combat weapons. Wilbur didn't quite have a choice as he slipped and rolled down the slanted roof, causing Tommy to laugh at him.

"I wish I got that on video!" Tommy laughed loudly though his hands were actively tasing someone before kicking them on their kneecaps and bringing them down. "That was so funny Wilbur, do it again."

"Oh, shut up Tommy," Wilbur said, dusting himself off before taking the gun Punz had handed to him and joining the fight.

The wind wasn't harsh and hard today, but Dream still paid extra attention to keeping the chopper as steady as possible at least until Skeppy reached the top.

"Hey guys," Skeppy sounded chirpy, which is odd considering the situation he was just in not minutes ago. Nothing was going to ruin his mood today. "You shouldn't have."

"Shouldn't have picked you up from being surrounded by a bunch of Davenport's buffoons?" George stated.

"At least Bad shouldn't have," Skeppy said, taking the extra sniper rifle that George had packed and assembling it for himself. "I heard it was bad luck for him to see me today."

"Well, when I said one of us should get out of the house so we don't see each other today, I didn't think you meant to go on a mission and get trapped and surrounded," Bad sighed, momentarily pausing from his aiming at the battle on the ground to give Skeppy a kiss on the lips. "Really? On our wedding day?"

"I wasn't the one who insisted on doing it within a week," Skeppy scoffed. "You brought this onto yourself," He said, steadying himself next to Bad before he began aiming at the battlefield.

Turns out that when you bring an extra dozen people as backup, the fight ends pretty quickly. That and the fact that SWAT had finally arrived on site and started to detain people.

It was a rush, and Dream was glad to say that it was a relatively easy and simple retrieval mission. He laid back against his seat with a sigh, watching Wilbur speaking with one of the SWAT agents before jumping into Sapnap's car. Ranboo had driven back to pick up the people he'd left stranded, and Bad had even rolled the rope ladder back up.

It was efficient, and it was quick.

"What time is it right now?" Dream asked.

"Dream, oh my god," Skeppy laughed. "Has he been worried about whether or not we'll meet our

"3:53," George replied.

"We can still make it!" Dream yelled.

"What?" Skeppy exclaimed. "You're not going to get across town to City Clerk in 7 minutes."

"We're on a helicopter, why not?" Dream said.

"And the helicopter needs to be *parked*, Dream," Bad said. "You can't park on top of the Marriage License Bureau."

"You guys are no fun," Dream tsked.

"Just bring us back to HQ," Bad told him. "We'll be fine."

Dream really had no other choice no matter how much he wanted to will it to happen, the fact of the matter is, he will get in so much trouble if he tried to land a helicopter in the middle of some random park. With a little sassy guidance from a judgemental Callahan, Dream landed the chopper at the top of the Miami HQ safely.

Dream held out his hand which George took to help steady himself as he hopped out of the helicopter, being kind to his very recently injured leg. They were walking towards the rooftop door when the door swung open violently, and out popped Puffy.

"What are you guys doing?" Puffy exclaimed. "We're late, let's go!"

"Puffy, we're already late," Bad sighed. "We're not gonna make it in time, we're like 10 minutes over and we haven't even driven there."

"It's alright Puffy, we'll schedule it for next week, it's fine," Skeppy said.

"Yeah, no, I knew you two were going to pull some shit the second I saw Skeppy left with Wilbur this morning, so Niki called ahead to the City Clerk's office and had your appointment moved to 4:30," Puffy explained, a triumphant look on her face. Bad and Skeppy looked at each other in surprise before looking back at a grinning Puffy, who snapped her fingers repeatedly. "Let's go, let's go, let's go!"

The group of them barreled down the stairs until they got to the first floor with elevator access and jumped in.

"Where's the ring?" Puffy asked.

"Techno? Should have it?" Dream said hesitantly. "I told him to get the ring and bring Karl because Karl knows where the receipt is, but Karl was pretty occupied with trying to get SWAT to where we were so honestly, I don't know if-"

"Oh my god," George facepalmed himself. "Did we get the suits from the dry cleaners? We totally forgot to get the suits from the dry cleaners."

"And the shoes!" Dream gasped. "We forgot the shoes!"

"What shoes?" Bad asked quizzically.

"Honestly, I'm happy enough if we have an appointment today, we don't have to have the suits, the rings, or the shoes," Skeppy said. "It'll be good enough if we have everyone there, it'll be sweet and-"

"The flowers!" George said frantically. "Cal, you're so right. Who was supposed to get the flowers?"

And just like that, the elevator opened up on the training floor, in front of them were a whole bunch of faces staring back at them.

"We're late!" Sam yelled.

"Okay, okay," Dream said. "Ranboo, you take your group and get the flowers from 1st Ave. and 6th St. Sapnap, the dry cleaners. Jack, I'm gonna need you to get the shoes and Techno?" Dream called, looking around blankly.

"He's already got the ring, he and Phil are literally waiting at the clerk's office," Wilbur told him, looking at the text Techno had sent him.

"Punz, you're gonna clear the road, I'm gonna drive Bad and Skeppy to the office now," Dream said. "We'll meet you guys there in-" He checked his watch. "Ten minutes?"

You would've thought that they were running off to another mission the way everyone quickly jumped into action. You might even think they were more efficient and determined that they were not even an hour ago when they had to run out and save their teammates' lives from imminent danger. People split themselves off into cars and quickly drove out into the streets.

We're not going to talk about how Tommy jumped out of the car first before Ranboo pulled into a parallel park, and ran into the florist asking- no, demanding that he needed flowers and started haphazardly picking the pre-arranged bouquets that the florist had on display. Tubbo coming in and picking them up wasn't quite helping either.

"What are you two doing?" Ranboo yelled as the two boys froze with armfuls of flowers.

"They said they needed flowers," Tommy replied.

"Come on boss-man, we have to go," Tubbo told him.

Ranboo looked over Tommy's shoulders to see the very young and distressed-looking assistant open-mouthed and speechless at the sight. Ranboo could only facepalm.

"Put them back, put those back right now," Ranboo instructed them before walking towards the cashier's counter. "I'm so sorry, I'm very sorry. I'm actually here to pick up the arrangement under the name Walker. I have the email receipt?" He said, showing the poor girl his phone screen.

"Y-yes sir, right away," She replied, immediately leaving for the back rooms.

"Go wait in the car," Ranboo scolded Tommy and Tubbo.

It only took a few minutes before Ranboo walked back into the car with a beautifully wrapped bouquet of roses, handing it to Aimsey who'd claimed the front seat when the other three were running into the flower shop, and starting the car.

"That's it?" Tubbo exclaimed. "One bouquet?"

"It's a courthouse wedding, what were you expecting?" Ranboo said.

"Sunflowers? Lily of the valley? Something interesting and with *character*. This is basic and boring," Tommy said bitterly.

"It's sweet, it's classic," Aimsey said, giving the flowers a quick sniff. "Come now, let's go. We're late."

"We've been late for 20 minutes," Ranboo muttered as he speed off into the street.

Sapnap's run was much smoother, seeing as how Karl didn't try to raid the whole drycleaners to two tuxedos. Sapnap barely parked the car before Karl came running back out, throwing the suit to Quackity in the back seat.

"Don't wrinkle it, don't wrinkle it, make sure it doesn't wrinkle," Karl said.

"Do you think it's funny that we're getting Skeppy and Bad their tuxedos while I have bloodstains on my pants?" Quackity muttered. "We're so dirty, I have dirt on my shirt from getting thrown against that pick-up truck tire."

"You got what?" Karl screeched. "Why didn't I hear it on the comms?"

"That was actually pretty funny," Sapnap chuckled and Quackity giggled along.

"No it's not, I said neither of you should get hurt," Karl pouted.

"You also smell bad too, you smell like sweat," Sapnap told Quackity, looking at him through the rearview mirror.

"I still look better than you," Quackity hummed.

"You guys are so mean to each other," Karl rolled his eyes but failed to hide his little smile.

The last most disastrous run would be the shoe run. It was- interesting, to say the least.

"I don't know why Dream told me to get the shoes, I literally don't even know where Bad lives," Jack said frantically as he sped down the road.

"Turn left here, turn left-" Sam didn't get to fully finish his sentence before he was thrown against the window due to Jack taking a sudden hard turn in the intersection.

"You definitely blew through the red light, you're gonna get a ticket," Fundy said.

"We'll deal with that later," Jack waved it off. "How are we going to get into their apartment?"

"They have a key under their mat," Sam told them.

"They have a-" Wilbur said, frowning deeply. "You're telling me two Herobrine agents, who have spent North of 7 years catching criminals, like I mean really, really dangerous criminals- murderers, actual murderers- they keep a spare key under their welcome mat?" His voice was absolutely incredulous.

"Yeah," Sam replied.

"God, it would've been so easy to kill you guys when we were evil," Wilbur sighed, frankly a little

amazed at this whole situation. "I could've done it alone, I could've done it 5 years ago."

"Well, you didn't, so-" Sam stuck his tongue out at Wilbur.

"Real mature Sam, real mature," Wilbur said.

Jack was told to wait in the car while Sam, Wilbur, and Fundy sprinted up three flights of stairs to get to Bad and Skeppy's new apartment. When the door swung open, they were greeted by piles and piles of brown boxes.

"Jesus Christ," Fundy exclaimed. "They haven't unpacked at all."

"They have so much stuff," Wilbur frowned.

"Well start looking," Sam told them.

The three of them started walking around and looking at the labels on the boxes.

"This big one just says knives," Fundy said. "Don't you guys get weapons from Herobrine?" He asked, opening the box out of curiosity. "Why would he need this many kni- That's a whole machete, he has a whole machete in here."

"Close the machete box and find the *shoes* box," Sam scolded.

"These ones say *clothes skeppy wanted to throw out*," Wilbur read out loud. "And this one is *dog toys*. This box of dog toys is larger than that box that says *kitchen*. They don't even have a dog!"

"Yet. Bad's gonna get one soon," Sam told them.

"This one says *VHS tapes* and under it in red says do not watch," Fundy stifled a laugh. "I'm watching these."

"This box has a photo album titled *photos of bad when he was bald*," Wilbur said. "And another titled *embarrassing dream photos*."

"Found the shoes!" Sam yelled. "God you guys are useless, I found the shoes."

"Oh nice," Fundy said.

"Alright, let's go, we're late," Wilbur said, walking towards the door.

"Wait," Sam stopped, effectively blocking the doorway.

"What's up?" Fundy said.

"We're stealing that album of embarrassing dream photos," Sam said.

"Ten steps ahead of you mate," Wilbur said, showing Sam that he's already stashed the photo album under his jacket, before finally leaving for the road.

Dream was driving like a madman, and George was sitting on the front seat, clutching to the handle for his dear life.

"Holy shit Dream, we're going to die!" George yelled out.

"Dream, you can relax," Bad exclaimed from the back seat, also gripping the handle as if his life depended on it. (It totally depended on it.) "We're going to beat the other three cars no matter what happened, so I don't know why you're speeding?"

Dream did not answer, which is a very, very bad tell of when Dream is too focused on something to be bothered with conversation. This also meant that Dream took what was supposed to be a 10 minutes drive including traffic into a less than 6-minute drive with a lot of road rage and angry honking.

Skeppy and George wanted to hurl the second they stepped out of the car.

"And here I thought I was a fast rider and a hazard to society," Punz hummed playfully. "Clearly people have never seen Dream drive."

"You guys look terrible," Technoblade commented, having been waiting outside of the doors of the City Clerk's office for the last half an hour.

"We're here, we're here, we're not late," Dream said speedily.

"I'm gonna need a minute," Skeppy gagged, putting a hand on his torso to steady himself.

"Where's everyone?" Dream asked.

"Everyone else had errands, I don't know why you think we wouldn't be the first to get here," George looked at his soulmate in bewilderment.

"Oh hey, you're here!" Philza cheered, walking out of the building and down the steps. "They're very kind, I've managed to make them push it to 4:45, we're just letting another couple go before Bad and Skeppy."

"Oh thank god," Dream said, sliding down the side of the parked car until he was sitting on the pavement, his back resting against the car door.

"Are we late?" Puffy yelled, running down the street with Niki, Foolish, Ponk, and Callahan.

"Phil got us another 15 minutes," Bad told her and she sighed.

"Figured you guys are gonna need the extra time," Phil reasoned.

"Oh great," Puffy sighed. "We have time for you to clean up and get the gunpowder and grease out of your hair and face. We stopped for combs and a hair gel from 7-eleven."

"Come on," Foolish said, dragging Skeppy and Bad into the public washroom inside of the Clerk's office.

"I got the ring," Techno muttered calmly, taking the boxes out of his pocket. "Dream, you're best man, right?"

"Right," Dream was still panting on the ground. "J-just keep 'em. I'm gonna lay down here for a bit."

Sapnap's car was the first to arrive out of the three.

"Are we late?" Sapnap asked.

"Why is Dream on the floor?" Quackity questioned.

"No, they're getting ready in the bathroom inside, you can take the tuxedos in," Phil told Karl who immediately ran into the building. "And him-" Phil looked at Dream. "I'm not so sure."

"I got the flowers!" Tommy's voice could be heard for miles by how loud he was shouting. He was running toward Phil before stopping and panting. "I got the flowers."

"Are we late?" Ranboo asked.

"No, they're getting ready in the bathroom," Phil kindly explained yet again. "We'll just keep the flowers out here with the rings."

"So we're not late?" Tubbo said.

"Still waiting for the shoes, and Jack's car," George replied.

Just like they were summoned, Jack's car came speeding down the road. Wilbur and Sam emerged out of the back seat of the car with a UHaul box from Bad and Skeppy's apartment that had *SHOES* written with Sharpie on it.

"You brought the whole box?" Sapnap shouted. "Why did you bring the whole box?"

"Dream just said *shoes*, like that's the most specific thing he could ever ask, we don't know which *shoes* you're talking about," Wilbur nagged.

"Are we late?" Sam sighed.

"No," Phil said, patient as ever. "You could probably bring the box to the washroom and just let them get the shoes they needed."

Honestly?

It was a goddamn miracle.

By exactly 4:43, they were all ready. Well, *they* meaning Bad and Skeppy for the most part. Bad and Skeppy were in their tuxedos, Skeppy holding the bouquet of roses, both wearing dress shoes. For an outfit change and a makeover in the City Clerk's bathroom, they cleaned up pretty nicely. You could tell that Foolish helped a lot with their hair.

Everyone else still looked like a mess. Dream could feel his button-up shirt absolutely soaked from the helicopter flying and frantic car driving. Punz still had his motorcycle jacket on, Sapnap still had his shoulder holster on, and George had his sniper goggles hanging on his neck. Wilbur looked ruffled up and honestly, everyone was in work clothes looking a little disheveled and exhausted, covered in dirt, sweat, and a little blood.

But at least Skeppy and Bad looked great.

"The rings?"

Dream had to admit he missed the ceremony. It's fine though, it wasn't glorious nor long. It was a courthouse wedding after all, quick and efficient just like Bad and Skeppy wanted it. Dream reached into his pocket and didn't find the rings. He patted himself down, frantically looking around before he heard somebody clear his throat.

Dream never took the ring from Techno.

Dream sheepishly caught the black velvet box that Techno tossed him before presenting it to Bad and Skeppy.

"Vows?"

"Can I go first?" Skeppy requested. "Okay. Here goes," Skeppy exhaled nervously. "Bad. I've known you for a very long time. And for as long as I've known you, you've been my best friend, and I'm probably the luckiest person in the world because my best friend just so happens to be my soulmate."

The smile on Skeppy's face was so big and wide, swear it could've split his face in half.

"There's no amount of words that can ever fit the feelings I have for you," Skeppy said, sliding the ring onto Bad's finger. "I will always feel committed, grateful, and mostly try my absolute hardest to reciprocate all my love and care for you. I love you, Bad."

Absolutely no one was crying and you can't prove it.

"Skeppy," Bad said after a bit of a pause, letting Skeppy's words sink into him while also steadying his breath so he doesn't cry. "You are the best best friend anyone could ever ask for. You are the best teammate, the best roommate, the best partner, and the best soulmate I could ever have, and I couldn't be more thankful that I have you in my life."

Yeah, no, they were definitely crying now.

"I will always have your back, I will always be by your side," Bad vowed. "I'm so excited to start the next chapter of our lives together. I love you so much, and I promise I won't *muffins* you too often," He smiled, sliding the ring into Skeppy's fingers. "Oh and when we get a dog really soon, you can name them."

Dream could see Techno turning to Wilbur and asking what *muffins* mean.

"By virtue of the authority vested in me under the laws of the State of Florida, I now pronounce you husband and husband," The crowd was cheering before they even kissed. "You may now kiss each other."

The cheering got even louder, which would happen when you bring a whole village to be your witnesses to a courthouse wedding. Bad placed a hand on Skeppy's cheek and pulled him into a kiss, all smiles, and teeth, before pulling him down even further into a dipping kiss. When they resurfaced for air, they absolutely could not contain themselves, Skeppy happily jumping in his spot and Bad pulling him into a hug.

"So," Dream said, finding his way next to George. "Are you going to try and catch the bouquet or are you gonna let me do it?"

"That's a very weird way to ask someone to marry you," George chuckled.

"I'm very competitive, I just wanna know," Dream said innocently.

George sighed, looking up at Dream lovingly. Dream smiling down at him, his perfectly white teeth and slightly crooked smile make it impossible for George not to smile back. The two of them were busy looking at each other that they missed the actual throwing of the bouquet. The flowers flew across the room and Foolish was the one who caught them. Oh if you could see both Ponk and Sam's faces.

"That's *interesting*," George laughed. "I'd like to see how those three play out," He hummed.

"More than those three?" Dream whispered, guiding George's attention to Sapnap, Karl, and Quackity, holding out their hands as if they were trying to see how rings would look on their finger.

Wedding fever, who could blame them? It's very contagious.

It was a mellow walk afterward, people chatting as they left the office, laughing and joking with each other after a pleasant albeit small and intimate ceremony. George slipped his hand into Dream's, intertwining their fingers.

"I didn't mean-" Dream began. "I wasn't proposing, you know?"

"I was kidding, Dream," George bumped his shoulders against Dream's. "I was teasing."

"If I was, I'm not gonna do it like that," Dream continued. "I'm going to be super romantic."

"Oh, are you now?" George teased.

"Yeah, it's going to be in a skyscraper restaurant, because you love heights, and I hate heights, and you love seeing me suffer," Dream explained.

"I don't-" George started to giggle. "I don't *love heights* and I don't *love to see you suffer*."

"I disagree," Dream replied curtly. "It'll be with a big and expensive diamond ring, and it'll be a stolen diamond ring because you'll appreciate the effort."

"You're going to steal me a diamond ring?" George sounded skeptical. "You're going to commit a crime for me?"

"Yes, but I'll make sure I steal it from some no-good bastard like a mob boss or human trafficker, or some douchebag rich billionaire," Dream justified.

"Ah, I see," George nodded along.

"And then I'm going to sing you a song," Dream said. "Because embarrassing you is simply a must."

"Oh no," George whined. "No, please no."

"Sorry, the plan's already in motion, I've already started taking guitar lessons," Dream shrugged.

"You're such an idiot," George shook his head.

"And then I'm going get you to the rooftop, and I'll set up your rifle," Dream said. "No bullets, because we're not shooting anything. And I'm gonna get you to peer into the scope to the next building."

"And?" George was both curious and impressed.

"And you'll read the words Will you marry me? through the scope. I don't know if it's gonna be paint or giant poster boards, I haven't figured that out yet," Dream said. "You'll look up and turn around and I'll be on my knees with the ring."

George was out of words, only being able to look up at Dream as he continued to talk.

"And then there'll be champagne, and confetti and Sapnap'll probably be hiding on the other side of the roof-" Dream rambled on.

"You've-" George smiled. "You've really *thought* about this, haven't you?"

Dream stopped, freezing as if he hadn't realized that he'd been caught being absolutely lovestruck and being a lovesick idiot, no better than a 13-year-old girl doodling their crush's initials on their math workbook. He looked down at George, opening his mouth to say something but was at a loss for words himself.

"No," Dream lied.

"You don't know what my answer was gonna be to the hypothetical question," George said.

"Doesn't matter because I'm not asking," Dream said. "Not yet anyway."

"Not yet," George agreed.

George and Dream stood next to each other in comfortable silence, watching Tommy and Tubbo

chucking rice at Skeppy and Bad.

"How about we focus on getting through that dinner plan we have with your family next week, and then we'll try and get through Christmas with my family, who I haven't seen in a handful of years and might cause a couple of issues-" George said slowly. "And once those are done, then we can talk."

"We'll talk," Dream repeated with a nod.

The two soulmates looked at each other, smiling at each other as if it was a wedding of their own. It was astonishing, how much love you could feel from their gazes alone and little touches in their hands. You would've never known the pain and suffering they're gone through, and subsequently, put each other through in the last few weeks if not months. All the times their paths crossed all the *almosts* and *maybes*, and situations that didn't happen. You wouldn't know their story just by looking at them.

Still, there was a certain beauty to starting over on a clean slate, both of them seemingly moving on from their convoluted and intense, though ultimately eventful, dramatic, and unbelievable story.

"You made a mistake when you saved my life that first time," Dream told him, smiling cheekily. "Now you're never getting rid of me."

The secret agent and the sniper.

God, if only people knew their story.

"No," George replied. "I didn't."

Chapter End Notes

do yall believe that skeppy's wedding vows are literally his tweet that he sent bad on their muffinversary like that's insane (also haha the best bf dig from bad, skephalo is something else)

also callback to George in the first chapter saying he wasn't excited to get in a car with dream because dream speeds, ah the memories

anyway, this is it, this is the end! this is my last sign off from the mcyt fandom (unlikely that I'll come back). I know i have like 2-3 fics that are wips and aren't finished, but gy6 is the only one that I felt like i really needed to finish based on how many people read it and commented on it, and showed it so much love, and so I did. It was my goal to end it by 2022 as to wrap it up neatly in a bow, I'm just glad that i could give a few people that closure to this ending.

special thanks to cab primdise (aha i don't know when you're gonna get to this point of reading this authors note but heyyyyy) couldn't and wouldn't have finished this fic without you <3.

see you guys around (?) maybe ? hope everyone has a very very happy new years !!

- JJ

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